

Industry Watch - Emerging “Ice” Issues

May 2007

The Ontario Recreation Facilities Association’s Arena Technical Advisory Committee continues to monitor industry operational challenges. As a general awareness to membership concerns and issues, please take time to review the following industry “emerging issues”. If you are experiencing any of the following identified operational challenges, you are asked to share your experience and provide input to the committee at tpiche@orfa.com – thank you!

Deteriorating Ice

Members express their concern surrounding operational challenges in respect to ice that is extensively used during a typical scheduled period. The following are identified as direct issues to the problem.



1. Too many people on the surface at one time. This may occur during open public skates or special events. The O.R.F.A recommends that each skater in a public skating session be provided with 100sq.ft of space – on a typical community rink of 85 x 185 a maximum of 157 persons should be permitted on the surface.
2. Poorly planned ice practices. Hockey coaches that utilize the same drill patterns on a sheet of ice which results in poor ice conditions that cannot be safely used until repaired. Too many times a facility operator has only 10-minutes to correct a sheet of ice. The O.R.F.A. reminds all facility operators that it is their responsibility to create a resurfacing plan to meet the set schedule of activities.
3. Unskilled operators who do not understand the science of ice creation and maintenance are adding to the problem.

Ice Logo’s

Issues surrounding some materials that are being used for ice logos are emerging. There are many different materials and installation methods for ice logos. The O.R.F.A. does not sanction any one product or method. It is strongly recommended that any operation that is considering installing ice logos to extensively research the product and installation method prior to installing

Side-bar – some facilities are experiencing hockey organizations that are selecting and purchasing logos which arrive on site with no directions for installation; or, there is not enough time to properly install them.



Poor Ice Paint Dumping Practices

The O.R.F.A. reminds all facility managers to review or create an internal policy on the disposal of ice paint.



The Ministry of Environment requires that the following be completed (after ice has been melting outside of the facility):

1. Pump out all storm sewer catch basins on the local street and dispose of the wastewater in the sanitary sewer system.
2. Thoroughly clean the street and parking lot.
3. Ensure that the removed ice contaminated with paint was either:
 - Trucked to an acceptable disposal area.
 - Melted in a contained area.
 - Disposed of through a sanitary sewer system.
4. Remove and dispose of any paint residue attached to ditches in the area.
5. Submit a contingency plan to the provincial officer to outline what actions are taken to prevent the discharge of paint residues to ditches.

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Watch for the release of our “Waste Management” guidelines for recreation facilities later this year!

Backflow Protectors

Recent incidents that realized chemically treated or untreated water entering into potable water supplies have resulted in changes to the Building Code which requires ongoing detailed inspections, maintenance and testing of backflow prevention devices in all public buildings.

CSA Standard document, specific to B64.10.1-01 which guides the requirements for maintaining and testing backflow devices. This document does not guide the selection and installation of such devices – managers should refer to **CSA Standard document B64-10** for such information. Note: More detailed information on this subject should be expected in the near future.

Outdoor Ice

Offering outdoor ice has a long historical connection with Canadian winters! Ice sports were originally played on natural ponds, lakes and rivers with many communities continuing to offer skating and sporting events on natural or refrigerated outdoor ice. Volunteer organizations or neighbourhood groups maintain many of these facilities.

The O.R.F.A. has noted an elevated concern toward the offering of outdoor ice skating opportunities. A complete guideline for these types of venues is in its final draft stage and should be available to all O.R.F.A. members in the next few weeks.



White Pucks & Golf Balls



The O.R.F.A. has noted an increase in the use of white pucks and golf balls by hockey coaches as part of their player skills development. These items if left on the surface are hard to see and can jam an ice resurfacer's auger system. While the golf balls are finding their way off the surface and are being shot in facility common areas - thus creating a potential safety hazard.

The O.R.F.A. encourages all facility operators to diligently monitor their environments and to immediately report any changes in user habits to management.

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