



Ziplines

Recreational activities are pillars of summer/winter camp, summer school, and recreational center experiences. They provide an opportunity for socialization and learning in a fun setting. These activities also provide an increased liability and potential for staff and/or participant injury. The safety of participants and staff should be standard operating procedure. It should be completed to the highest professional standards and in line with federal, state, local, and accrediting agency guidelines. The following checklist template provides a high level oversight to assist with your activity structure. Your organization is responsible for the development of your own written program guidelines and policies for the oversight of your activities. Through consistent management and preventative programs, exposures can be reduced to help ensure a safe recreational experience.

Pre-Activity:

- Established written program which outline participant guidelines, participant assessment, liability waivers, instructor requirements, training, emergency action plan, and other additional criteria as determined by the program and in line with local, state, federal, and accrediting agency guidelines.
- Participant assessment protocols in place and completed in line with internal written policies. This includes emotional and physical assessment of each participant to evaluate their ability to safely participate in the activity.
- Participant files contain emergency contact information and legal counsel reviewed liability waivers signed by legal guardians.
 - File maintained in line with written policy.
 - Kept in a secure location.
- Active and updated training program specific to the exposure.
 - Completed in line with established written policies.
 - Overseen by qualified and competent staff.
 - Done prior to start of the activity.
 - Retraining completed per internal written policy.
- Staff-to-participant ratios maintained throughout the activity per written policy and in line with state and accrediting agency guidelines.
- If program uses a third party service for the activity, adequate risk transfer control in place.
 - Formal contract between organization and service.
 - Verify certificates of insurance with adequate limits.
 - Additional Insured status.
 - Hold Harmless language.
 - See [Nationwide's Risk Transfer resource](#) for additional information on how to protect your organization.

Design:

- Zipline components to create a complete system include a zipline cable, platform, trolley, braking system, and emergency arrest devices (aka emergency brake).
- If the design relies on trees to secure the lines, regular inspection by an arborist should occur to assess the structural integrity of the tree.
- Is the course designed to slow the rider through the angle and tension on the line, or are braking mechanisms utilized? Braking only using double padded gloves relies solely on the participant, while braking mechanisms and EAD help prevent injury. Emergency Arrest Devices help assist in braking if the primary brake fails.
- Ziplines are not federally regulated, which means they can vary by state, county, and even city, so it is important to know your specific standards. ANSI and ASTM have developed specific standards which relate to ziplines. ANSI accredited associations include the [Professional Ropes Course Association](#) and the [ACCT](#).

Inspection:

- Daily Inspection of the zipline cables should occur to look for broken, damage, or loose wires; diameter reduction, and a visual inspection of physical impact areas on the cables.
- Before each use, inspect fall protection safety gear (such as harnesses, helmets, lanyards, carabiners, pulleys, and trolleys) for tears, fraying, cracking, distortion, and damage. Replace if they show any sign of damage.
- An inspection checklist should be utilized, with employee sign off, and kept on file.

Maintenance:

- Each element of the zipline should be routinely inspected by staff, and by qualified contractors such as the course designer.
- Train operators during orientation and then again annually on safe zipline operations.
- Post rules conspicuously and provide participants with an overview of proper usage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and zipline safety.
- Make sure riders meet the proper height and weight for your zipline and are equipped with the proper PPE.

For Additional Information:

[The Association for Challenge Course Technology \(ACCT\)](#)

[Professional Ropes Course Association](#)

[State Zipline Regulations](#)

[Zipline Safety Tips](#)

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