FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Playground Facilities in Kansas City, Kansas Re-Open to Public

Visitors encouraged to practice social distancing and sanitize hands before and after using equipment

Playground equipment at publicly-owned parks in Kansas City, Kansas re-opened on May 23, 2020.

“Park crews began to re-open playgrounds over the Memorial Day weekend, a sign of hope and positive progress as our community continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time of uncertainty, our parks are needed now more than ever, so that families and individuals can get outside for fresh air, sunshine, and exercise – which is a great way to cope with the stress caused by the past few weeks of restrictions. A big thanks to our community for their patience during this time, and a shout out to parks staff on the front lines, who are keeping our parks clean and safe,” said Angel Obert, Deputy Parks & Recreation Director.

The decision to re-open playground equipment was made after extensive consultation with the Unified Government’s Public Health Department. Playground equipment was initially closed on March 21 out of an abundance of caution during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Working together, the Unified Government’s Parks & Recreation and Public Health Departments issued Parks & Recreation re-opening guidelines based on recommendations from the Centers for Diseases Control (CDC) and the Kansas Recreation & Parks Association (KPRA). The guidelines follow the same Ad Astra Phase 2 guidance adopted by Wyandotte County’s Chief Medical Officer on May 20. The guidance document is available online at wycokck.org/COVID-19. The KPRA’s guidance document is available online at krpa.wildapricot.org.

“As we go through the process of gradually re-opening our community, it is essential that we take a methodical approach to reinstating operations that protect public health and safety within our parks and recreation facilities,” said Angel Obert, Deputy Parks & Recreation Director. “In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff of park and recreation professionals have leveraged the role they play in our community, swiftly reacting to keep parks, trails, and green spaces open to support physical and mental health.”

Although playground equipment is now open, visitors are encouraged to maintain social distancing, practice good hygiene (such as not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth and covering sneezes and coughs with a tissue or your elbow), and to use hand sanitizer before & after using playground equipment. Visitors will need to bring their own hand sanitizer to parks and recreation facilities. Where available, park restrooms may be used to thoroughly wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

“We encourage parents to make sure children understand the importance of social distancing, and maintaining at least six feet between themselves and other children and adults that they don’t live with,”
said Dr. Erin Corriveau, Deputy Medical Officer with the Unified Government Public Health Department. “Children over the age of two and adults who are supervising play should continue to wear a mask while in public as well. This combination of social distancing, masks, and good hygiene is our best way to fight the spread of COVID-19 in our community.”

Residents with questions about the Parks & Recreation Re-Opening plan should contact 3-1-1. To learn more about the County’s COVID-19 response, access important FAQs, and view additional information, visit wycokck.org/COVID-19.

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