

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Ice Maintenance.....	4
2.1 How the Compressors cool Ice.....	4
2.2 Good Ice.....	6
2.3 Maintenance that Works.....	7
2.4 Rink Shovelling.....	8
3. Making the Rink a Good Place for Skaters.....	11
4. Food.....	15
4.1 Starting Off.....	15
5. Campfires.....	19
5.1 Making a Good Campfire.....	19
6. A Tidy Rink.....	21
6.1 Organization: Basic Principles.....	21
6.2 Taking Inventory.....	22
6.3 Indoor Organization/ Daily Tasks.....	22
6.4 Outdoor Organization/ Daily Tasks.....	23
7. Staff Meetings.....	25
8. Community Outreach.....	26

8.1 Good Communication.....	26
9. Toronto's Rinks.....	28
10. Enforcing the Scheduled Ages.....	34
11. Dealing With Problem Behaviour.....	36
11.1 Code of Conduct.....	37
11.2 How to Enforce It.....	38
11.3 Kids in Trouble.....	39
12. How to be Helpful on the Telephone.....	41

Appendices:

A: A Note to Rink Users.....	42
B: Outdoor Ice Rink Permits.....	44
C: Important Numbers.....	47
Acknowledgements.....	48

1. Introduction

Toronto has more outdoor artificial ice rinks (real ice, but cooled by compressors) than any city in the world: 4 outdoor rinks at central locations and 47 outdoor rinks in local neighbourhoods. *Warmer winters, no problem:* the outdoor artificial ice rinks are able to keep ice frozen in air temperatures up to 18 degrees Celsius *if the sun is weak*. For three months a year, people in Toronto get to skate under the open sky, on smooth, hard ice, in all weathers, in neighbourhoods all over the city.

Such treasures need good care! This booklet contains information about just that. A well-run outdoor rink can make winter a wonderful season.

This booklet is first of all for the people who staff the rinks. It is also for people who skate there – for everyone who loves our outdoor ice rinks and wants them to work well.

A neighbourhood outdoor ice rink can become a friendly social space for the three months of winter when parks and public spaces are often relatively empty. Dufferin Rink is one example of a rink that has been turned into a community gathering place. **CELOS**, the **CEntre for LOcal research into public Space**, asked the staff at Dufferin Rink to describe what works there. This booklet is the result of that discussion.

Want to tell us about your rink, for the next edition?
Contact us at: cityrinks@dufferinpark.ca.

2. Ice Maintenance

Keeping ice in good condition is a tricky job, but with diligence and a bit of luck, outdoor compressor-run ice rinks can have excellent ice. On-site park staff, zamboni drivers and rink users can co-operate to achieve a high standard of ice maintenance that is also affordable for the City.

2.1 How compressors cool ice

Inside the mysterious noisy room next to the changing area is the mechanical heart of the ice rink. The refrigeration plant is what keeps the ice surface frozen when the weather is not cold enough to freeze it naturally. Most plants have two 75 horsepower compressors, a big tank containing 600 pounds of ammonia, two glycol pumps, and a mass of pipes, some of which connect directly to a maze of smaller pipes encased in the concrete underneath the ice surface where people skate. The refrigeration plant works on the same principle as the refrigerator in your kitchen, but on a giant scale. At the rink, the gas in the ammonia tank is mechanically compressed until it becomes a liquid. The heat generated in this process is dissipated to the environment as it travels through a series of tubes that are submerged in water (this generates the steam that can be seen rising up from the roof of the rink house). The compressed liquid is then allowed to expand back into a gas. The conversion back into a gas *consumes* a great deal of heat (just as the

compression into a liquid *created* a great deal of heat). The conversion takes this heat from its surroundings, making them very cold. At the rink, the liquid ammonia expands, into a container holding a glycol solution. The glycol remains a liquid at very low temperatures, therefore making it suitable for the next step in the process. The cold glycol is then pumped through tubes in the concrete underneath the ice surface, keeping the ice frozen.

All of this compressing of gas and pumping of glycol requires a lot of energy, which costs money. Because of the high costs, both in dollars and to the environment, of such large-scale energy consumption, it is important that measures are taken to ensure that the plant is operating as efficiently as possible.

Web links:

How ice rink refrigeration works:

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/ice-rink.htm>

How thicker ice uses more energy:

<http://www.customicerinks.com/energyice/press3.htm>

Refrigerant hazards and safety:

<http://www.trane.com/commercial/issues/environmental/cfc6i.asp>

2.2 Good ice:

In order to maintain a good skating surface, the ice must be:



a) Cleared of excess snow

b) Free of any deep grooves or gouges

c) Maintained at a consistent level of hardness

To ensure an adequate level of hardness and smoothness as well as to increase energy efficiency:

- Outdoor ice thickness should be 1.5-3 inches, 4 inches is too thick

- Ice should be scraped for an extended period at least once a week, to cut down extra thickness built up by rain and routine flooding. This extended ice maintenance time should be built into the maintenance schedule (a good time is first thing in the morning on a week day when there are the fewest skaters likely to be turned away). Extra scraping is also necessary when the weather is warm and the ice is slushy, or when rainwater flooding needs to be pushed off.

- The zamboni blade should be sharpened once or twice a week depending on amount of use.
- Between ice maintenance sessions, park on-site staff can fill in deep gouges with snow and water, scrape slush away on warm days, and move the hockey nets periodically to prevent them from freezing to the ice. Rink users can be encouraged to report gouges (and they do!)
- An ice edger ought to be used at least once every two weeks to cut down the bumpy ice in the hockey rink corners that the zamboni may not be able to get at.

2.3 Ice maintenance that works:

- A **consistent zamboni schedule** should be agreed upon and followed by all, weather permitting.
- Zamboni drivers and on-site rink staff should work together in a **spirit of collaboration**, letting each other know what needs to be done and also consulting on ice problems and potential remedies
- When there are two ice pads, skaters can still use one pad while the other is being resurfaced in order to maximize the amount of time rink users can skate.
- During ice maintenance, **staff must keep skaters safe** from being injured by the zamboni. This includes (a) using hockey nets and a rink guard as a barrier when a lift gate is up and the zamboni is on one side, (b) making sure no one

is crushed during the raising or lowering of the lift gate, (c) making sure skaters stay off the ice where the zamboni is scraping, and (d) making sure that no one gets in the way of the zamboni when snow is being dumped.

- During ice maintenance, **staff must also keep the zamboni safe** from pucks or any other objects that might damage the machine and take it out of action.

2.4 Rink Shovelling:



When snow is falling, some extra actions need to be taken in order to keep the rink a fun and safe place to skate.

Important: If there is any snow on the ice at all, ask the shinny players to play with only one puck. Keep a very close eye on them and if it becomes difficult to see the puck make them stop playing. It is imperative that they don't lose a puck in the snow. **Pucks get stuck in Zamboni's and damage them, and we need to protect those machines!** Explaining this to the shinny players is a good idea.

If there is a light/medium snowfall and no zamboni or snow-plough driver is able to come and clear the ice just then, supervised skaters can clear the snow themselves. It

is very important to do this right because there are many possibilities for snow shoveling to be a disaster.

First, ask everyone to stop playing and see if there might be enough skaters around to clear the ice. If there are about five or six guys/gals and they are game, gather them together and explain the snow shovelling rules. Do not hand out shovels until you have explained the whole process. They will simply skate away with the shovels and you will have to yell. The rules are this:

1. A staff person has to be around for the shovelling from start to finish.
2. No one may play on the ice until everyone is done working.
3. **No snow may be piled anywhere on the ice,** especially against the boards.
4. All snow that is cleared **must be brought out of the rink** through the gate and **cleared to the side** so that a Zamboni or a plough can still get through the gate.
5. At least one of the players has to change from skates to shoes and help the staff person shovel the snow out of the rink and over to the side.
6. If there are more helpers than shovels a couple of people should continually skate around the rink and

push snow from the boards into the centre with their hockey sticks.

7. If there are not enough people around to clear the entire rink staff can organize them to clear half of the rink (the half closer to the gate).
8. Everyone who helps to clear the rink gets a reward, e.g. free pizza or cookie and a free drink. (Not every rink has these on hand, but it is a good idea to think of some kind of a reward for such hard work. Maybe you can just explain to people that they are being good hardy Canadians and living out our heritage!)

IMPORTANT: Shovels have to be locked up at all times unless skaters are committed to clearing the whole ice. Make sure the green metal shovels are locked up and that the other shovels are put back in the garage.

All of this will only be useful if everyone is vigilant about two things:

- 1. No pucks hidden under snow on the ice surface**
- 2. No piles of snow on the ice surface especially against boards or blocking the entrance to the rink**

3. Making the rink good for skaters

A City rink works best when rink staff and rink users make it work *together*. A good rink is one where rink users enjoy their visit and rink staff members enjoy making it work well.



Rink staff can work with the community to create the rink schedule, and co-operate to maintain it. The schedule should include shinny age times, permit times, lesson times, and ice-cleaning times designed to fit with rink programming.

Schedules: Printed rink schedules need to be widely circulated amongst rink users. Rink staff and zamboni drivers need to follow the schedule. That way, rink users can have confidence that the schedule is reliable, and they can plan their rink visits accordingly.

Seating: Rink staff should make sure there are lots of benches for people to sit and take a breather or change their skates. Benches or chairs should be arranged so people can talk to each other. Ice rinks can be important social centres in the wintertime, when people don't see each other around the neighbourhood as much.

What works: *If a change room doesn't have enough benches, rink staff can ask their supervisor to scrounge some from underneath the nearest recreation storage area. Plain locker-room benches are often forgotten in these areas, sometimes for years. If the benches your supervisor finds are a bit rough looking, ask for some paint and paint them a nice colour!*

Food: Have some food and drink for sale, even if it's just hot chocolate and cookies and apples. Skating makes people hungry. Food and drink also help to keep a rink running smoothly. If a rude rink user is hungry and you have food or drink for sale, you can tell them, "By eating our cookies you are promising to use polite language!" The smells of food cooking calms people down; reminds them of home. If someone doesn't have any money for food, offer him or her a trade, like shovelling some snow or picking up some litter. This way rink users and rink workers are part of the same team. There's more about food on page 15.

Supplies: Make sure you have basic supplies that skaters may need. These include: a **skate tightening tool**, **wax** for hockey sticks, **paper towels** for drying skate blades, a **saw** for customizing hockey stick length, and **scissors**. If you resell **pucks** and **hockey tape** that you buy in bulk (e.g. at Canadian Tire), you can make a little money for the rink, and it's a great convenience for hockey players to have a stock of those items available without having to run to the store. You should keep those items in a locked box in the staff office.

Kids' storybooks: Have kids' storybooks on hand indoors so parents can have a rest after a long skate while the kids amuse themselves, or a parent can amuse a smaller child and the older sibling can keep on skating outside. A few toys are nice too. Storybooks need to be kept tidy and accessible on a bookshelf – easy to scrounge – and toys need to have a place where kids can get at them but they won't be scattered all around. Rink staff will have to keep these resources orderly and in good condition – a little extra work, but what a difference they make!

Pictures: Put up some photos of people skating at your rink, hockey tournaments or other events. Rinks involve a lot of waiting around, and everything on the walls gets looked at.

Bulletin board: Have a public bulletin board with *current* posters of neighbourhood events, classes offered, skates

for sale, etc. This means tidying the bulletin board often and making sure all the postings are friendly and meaningful to your neighbourhood. A lively bulletin board becomes a point of contact for neighbours and people who are new to the area.

Repairs: Make sure everything in the room gets used or enjoyed somehow – a broken table in the corner takes up a lot of space, but with a hammer and some nails it could



become a perfect place for a game of checkers. If there are larger repair jobs, bring them to your supervisor's attention. You can call the City Property office for any building repairs needed. See appendix C for telephone numbers.

Sprucing up the rink change room: If the walls are dingy or have graffiti, paint them! You will need the support of your supervisor to do that. If s/he is not sure, suggest that they come and have a look at Dufferin Rink, to reassure them that a rink change room can be fixed up for very little money.

4. Food

Wait, why is this handbook talking about food? I thought it was about ice rinks!

Indeed, but City programming that includes food is easy to set up, it draws people to rink and it helps keep the atmosphere at a rink friendly and neighbourly.

People come together over food; they can't help it -- especially if it's not in vending machines.



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4.1 Starting off

Many rink change rooms have no snack bar area. No problem. To get started, a plain table will do, and an electrical outlet for plugging in a coffee maker and a kettle. If there is another plug for a toaster-oven or a microwave, even better. If your supervisor can get an old but good fridge installed in the rink office, for storing fruit drinks and perishable items like milk, you've got it made. Or you can use a couple of picnic coolers.

Safety: Make sure that any electrical chords are secured away from where they can be pulled by a child – put kettles etc. right by a wall and tape the chords down.

What works: You can buy a kettle, a coffee maker, some cups, spoons, and plates, storage bins and baskets for holding napkins etc. very cheaply at garage sales.

What doesn't work: Vending machines are not so good. Although common, they are often out of order and they don't allow you to add the human touch that makes even the simplest food special. As well, the rink can use the money you make by selling cheap food and drinks directly. That money can pay for the kettle and the coffeemaker, the paint you need for benches, second-hand skates to loan out to kids who do not have any skates of their own, and many other useful things.

Menu: Hot chocolate can be made easily with hot water and hot chocolate powder. Thirsty hockey players also like water and fruit juice, even if you're not allowed to sell pop (the City has an exclusive contract with Pepsi that may not allow you to duplicate any pop sales). The City has no exclusive contract for coffee sales, so a coffee maker with some good Fair Trade coffee will do well. If your rink does not have an adjacent community centre kitchen where you can bake, cookies can be bought pre-made and sold by the piece. Apples are easy, as long as you have a place to wash them. A microwave can heat up all sorts of individual-serving snack foods including hot noodle soups for cold

days. If there's a good local bakery nearby, you can buy from them and still get some mark-up; otherwise the big grocery stores can supply what you need.

Cleanliness: You will need a basin of water and a clean cloth to wipe up spills and food crumbs and keep your table clean. If you use disposable cups and napkins, you will need extra trash baskets so people won't litter. Once you get your set-up working well, if you decide to use real cups and plates you need a few more stackable basins, dish soap and bleach, to wash up and disinfect your dishes and utensils at the end of your shift.

Storage: All your food and utensils need to be kept away from dust and mice, so you'll need a few plastic storage boxes with tight lids. The City places a green lockable wooden bin in every rink, which can store anything that might be stolen.

Food safety: The Public Health department requires all food for sale to be prepared in a commercial, certified kitchen. That means you can't bake cookies at home. But all bakeries, farmers' markets, supermarkets, and take-out food places have such certified foods – so if you buy from them, no problem. Also, if you don't have a real snack bar with proper sinks in your rink (or at least, *not yet*), you need to have individual serving items rather than pots of soup or big pizzas. Examples of what works: individually-wrapped pizza bagels, Jamaican patties, cinnamon buns, muffins, fruit bars, Chinese noodles that just need boiling water

added. Cookies don't have to be individually wrapped as long as they were baked commercially and are served up clean from the package, with a napkin.

Equipment: Get a chalkboard and chalk for showing what you have to sell, napkins, garbage and recycling bins, dish washing soap, hand-washing soap, bleach, a drying rack, towels and a system of collecting cash (a fanny-pouch works well.)

Garbage: Set up garbage containers where appropriate, clean out garbage bins and try to pick up any garbage left by rink users. Using disposable cups, cutlery or plates certainly will make your life easier but work towards re-useable dishes instead of creating more garbage.

Money: You need to cover your costs and make a little bit extra. If you use a car to shop for groceries, you need to cover your gas as well. But you should be able to offer food cheaply. The food in a community rink is mainly for hospitality, not for food as a business. Will you still make a profit? Yes, if you calculate your prices right. That money can go toward improving your equipment or organizing a hockey tournament or buying a supply of checkers for the rink change room.

Rink before food: *The first priority of any worker in a rink is safety, good ice maintenance and friendliness. Do not let food preparation distract staff from these priorities. If there is a safety or maintenance problem, leave the "snack bar" immediately.*

5. Campfires

In winter, an outdoor campfire beside the rink draws people to the area and expands the space (if your rink change house is too crowded). It's a good place for birthday parties or other gatherings that would swamp out the regular rink users if held inside the rink change area. Also, sitting by a campfire beside a rink is another good way for neighbours to meet – which strengthens the neighbourhood.

5.1 Making a Good Campfire

- Get a fire permit through the City. (Your supervisor will have to help you with this).
- Make the fire close enough to the rink that it is accessible to people wearing skates (lay down mats if necessary).
- Choose a secure storage space for firewood and equipment. You need to procure a supply of dry wood, enough for the size of fire you wish to make.
- Barrel fires are another option – get a metal barrel, hammer in some air holes near the bottom. You can use scrap wood in camp fires or barrel fires, but NEVER any pressure-treated wood – it emits toxic fumes when burned.
- You will need: a couple of buckets of water and a shovel, a grate, and something (a metal stand or bricks) to position it over the fire, tongs, good quality oven mittens, newspaper, matches and kindling.

- You can BBQ hot dogs, keep soup warm, serve hot chocolate or apple cider or coffee or tea from a fire. If you feel quite inspired and enthusiastic, look up or ask about pioneer cooking or Aboriginal cooking.
- If there are community volunteers to help with the fire, go through a fire safety lesson each time and make sure there is a person in charge. Also keep an eye out to make sure the people at the fire are being smart. (Note: in twelve years of frequent fire permits at Dufferin Grove Park, there has not been one injury. People are generally very careful around fire.)



6. A Tidy Rink

Talking about keeping things tidy might make you groan, but keeping your rink clean and organized pays off:

- You can find things quickly when you need them
- When taking stock of supplies you can easily see what you're about to run out of
- Having fewer little frustrations (not being able to find things) puts you in a better mood on a busy afternoon, and frees up your time for more interesting things like making food or talking to skaters
- It leaves rink users in a better mood too!

6.1 Organization: basic principles

- **Everything has a place:** Figure out a set-up that works best, and then stick to it. Tupperware, large rubbermaid containers, shelves and labels can be handy here!

Everything gets used: Get rid of what you don't need. The Sally Ann and the garbage bin are always hungry; have the rink maintenance person to pick up supplies they've delivered that you don't need.

- **Everything gets cleaned:** From bathrooms to dishes to mopping the floor, it all needs to be done. You can order many cleaning supplies from the city.

6.2 Taking Inventory

- On the same day every week, take inventory of what's in storage at the rink: cleaning supplies (paper towel, detergent, mops, brooms, etc), toilet paper and paper towel for drying skates, road salt.
- Check your first-aid supplies especially band-aids, and reorder when they're getting low
- Check your food supplies, such as drinks, hot dogs, ingredients for cookies or other items sold at the snack bar, and so on. If you are using a lot of food supplies, a good way to reduce reliance on the huge retailers is to order in bulk from a neighbourhood business.

6.3 Indoor Organization/ Daily Tasks

Take a look around your rink: try to see it with the eyes of someone who's never been there before. What is the first thing that you notice when you walk into the change room? A broken pop machine or a winter sports mural? Trash on the floor or a nicely painted bench to sit on? Like it or not, we often do judge books by their covers – a rink that is relatively clean and cosy is more inviting, and people may find themselves sitting and chatting after they've taken off their skates. And a place that looks like people care about it makes people think twice about caring too!

- **Take pride** in where you work
- Keep the place **clean** and **organized**

- Make sure you have the tools to do so: mops, detergent, toilet paper etc. If you are running low, order them from your supervisor
- **Put things away in their place.** If they don't have a place, find one or make one
- **Change the rink's OGM (Out Going Message) daily**
Your OGM should inform people about your rink's activities and daily ice conditions. On bad weather days change the message every time the rink conditions change (i.e. before and after the rink is ploughed). It is very important to have clear telephone communication with rink users. This is one of the most direct ways that users interact with your rink and with the City of Toronto in general. A reliably updated outgoing message instils trust and calm in frustrated citizens!
- **Reply to telephone messages**
- Keep a list of the various rink supervisors' phone numbers
- Talk to the people that come to the rink; find out how they would like the rink to be. Do what you can to accommodate them.

6.4 Outdoor Organization

Seating – Make sure there are lots of benches for people to sit and take a breather or change their skates. Ask for

more benches from the city if there aren't enough, and phone in for repairs if they get broken.

Paths – The more paths you can dig through the snow, the more people can make their way to the ice. High traffic paths that take people from the street to the ice, and the rink house/change room are the most important. Snow shoveling is a great job for kids who don't have money and want a snack if you have food at your rink.

Rubber mats – Think about where skaters will need to walk and put mats there (e.g. to a fire circle, phone booth, bathrooms).

Mud – get wood chips or straw to cover up muddy paths so mud doesn't get tracked onto the ice.

Garbage bins – Shift City garbage bins around to high-traffic places. If necessary, ask for more bins or have some donated.

Crowded places – Are there certain places that are always jam-packed and others that are never used? Try and figure out why that is and make the lesser-used place more inviting with benches or better lighting.

Outdoor bulletin boards – many rink bulletin boards are a year or two out of date. That's because they're locked and harder to update. Find the key and post all the current rink information, special events, etc. Keep the key at the rink office so you can update any out-of-date signs right away.

7. Staff meetings

Regular staff meetings which include ALL rink staff – zamboni drivers as well as recreation staff – help make the rink run better. If there are any problems with ice maintenance or with bad behaviour, they can be worked out in conversation. It is important to keep minutes of any such meetings. Minutes should be distributed to everyone in attendance, as well as management and those who may have missed the meeting, in order to keep them in touch with what's going on.

When there are special events or unusual problems, rink friends can be invited to staff meetings so that staff and community members can co-operate in making the rink work better.

Plan to have some food and coffee at your meeting. Meeting over a bowl of hot soup can make everyone feel relaxed and lively discussion comes more easily.

8. Community Outreach

In order to keep your rink safe and enjoyable for all users, it is important that you get to know the people who regularly come to the rink.

A snack bar is a useful meeting place to chat with people and to learn their names. Rink guarding can be boring at times, but it is an excellent opportunity to chat with parents who are watching their kids or skaters who are taking a break. Learning people's names and a little bit about them makes it much easier to enforce rules. People are more likely to feel loyal when they have a relationship with the staff. Also, you are more likely to know some background reasons for why kids are acting out, if you have talked to them before.

An important aspect of community outreach is introducing people to their neighbours. As a rink staff member you are likely to be the central person who comes into contact with all the different rink users. If you get to know them, you can make sure they know each other, by introducing them.

8.1 Good Communication

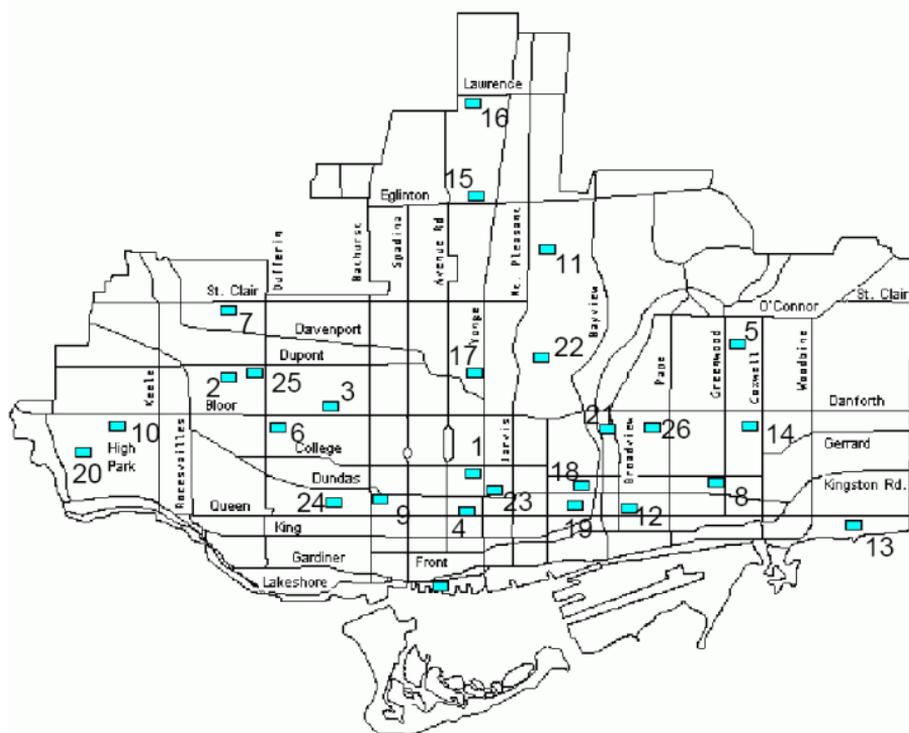
- Have the rink schedule posted in prominent places inside and out and have a stack of them available for people to take home.

- Inform yourself about skating resources in your neighbourhood so that you can answer people's questions. Find out where they can sharpen, buy and/or rent skates.
- Keep a schedule of other local rinks around so that you can let people know those schedules should they need them.
- Make sure your rink phone number is clearly posted and available to people so that they can find out rink conditions and schedules before they arrive at the rink.
- Contact all your neighbourhood schools and daycares, let them know what programs you have available (e.g. food or skate rentals), make sure they have a contact number for you and encourage them to let you know when they will be bringing groups.
- If someone looks confused, approach him or her in case they are too shy to approach you.



9. Toronto's Rinks

Being able to inform people about the location and schedules of ice rinks in their area will help ensure that people are able to get the most out of their neighbourhood and their rink. Knowing which rinks are available will help you to direct skaters properly. This should prevent instances of certain rinks overcrowding right next to vacant ones.



Toronto has more outdoor artificial ice rinks than any city in the world: **4 outdoor rinks at central locations and 47 outdoor rinks in local neighbourhoods.** The central and downtown rinks are listed here:

1. Barbara Ann Scott Rink / College Park Rink

College Park, SW of Yonge and College intersection, behind the College Park buildings

Pleasure Skating Only, Open 24 hours

416-392-6595

2. Campbell Rink

255 Campbell Ave., W. of Lansdowne, S. of Dupont

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0039

3. Christie Pits Rink

779 Crawford, NW of Bloor and Christie

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0910

4. City Hall Rink

100 Queen Street West at Bay St., on the south side of Nathan Phillips Square.

Pleasure Skating Only, Accessible 24 hours

416-392-7260.

5. Dieppe Park Rink

Cosburn Avenue East of Greenwood

Double Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0199

6. Dufferin Rink

875 Dufferin St., across from the Dufferin Mall, south of Bloor.

Double Pad, Open until 11pm

416-392-0913

7. Giovanni Caboto / Earls court / J.J.P. Rink

1367 St. Clair Ave. W., W of Lansdowne

Double Pad

416-392-7762

8. Greenwood Park Rink

Gerrard St. E. at Alton

Double Pad, Sunday Shinny

416 392-7804

9. Harry Gairey / Alexandra Scadding Rink

Bathurst St/Dundas St. W.

Double pad, Pay parking on Bathurst street.

416-392-7686

10. High Park Rink

Colborne Lodge Drive, Access from Bloor

Double Pad

416-392-7807

11. Hodgson Rink

East of Mt. Pleasant, on Davisville behind Hodgson school

Double Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0924

12. Jimmie Simpson Park Rink

870 Queen St. E. by Booth.

Single Pad

416-392-0923

13. Kew Gardens Rink

Foot of Lee, S of Queen, in the Beaches

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

Parking on Street.

416-392-0922.

14. Monarch Park Rink

Felstead Ave., SW of Danforth and Coxwell

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-7831

15. North Toronto Memorial CC

200 Eglinton Avenue West

Double Pad

416-392-6591

16. Otter Creek Rink

Around Chatsworth and Chudleigh, S side of Lawrence, E of Avenue Rd

Double Pad

416-392-0919

17. Ramsden Park Rink

Inside Ramsden Park, west side of Yonge Street across from the
Rosedale subway station

Double Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0918

18. Regent Park North Rink

Dundas St. E. north side, W of River, behind some buildings

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-6983

19. Regent Park South Rink

Shuter E of Sumach, north side

Double Pad, Sunday Shinny

Parking on Shuter street right by rink.

416-392-0917.

20. Rennie Park Rink

Morningside Ave, at Runnymede

Double Pad, Open 24 hours (on pleasure side only)

Large (free) rink parking lot.

416-392-1103 or 392-0392.

21. Riverdale Rink

Broadview at Moncrest, S of Danforth

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-7801

22. Rosedale Park Rink

Roxborough Ave at Schofield

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0914

23. Ryerson Rink

Dundas Street E., just East of Yonge, around Victoria St.

Pleasure Skating only

416-392-1111

24. Trinity Park Rink

Gorevale south of Dundas St. Parking along Gore Vale Avenue

Single Pad, Sunday Shinny

416-392-0912

25. Wallace Emerson Rink

1260 Dufferin St., just S. of Dupont.

Double Pad

416-392-0911

26. Withrow Rink

725 Logan Ave. N of Bain

Single Pad

416-392-0909

27. Harbourfront Rink (Privately Operated)

South of York Quay Centre | 235 Queens Quay West

Shinny Pad

416-973-4866

Visit the rinks that are near your rink at the beginning of the rink season, **get copies of their schedule and offer them some of yours.** This way, if your rink is overcrowded or there is a certain age group scheduled at any given time, you can direct other eager skaters to where they can lace up and skate at another rink nearby.

For more detailed information about Toronto City Rinks, visit www.dufferinpark.ca and click on City Rinks.

10. Enforcing the Scheduled Ages

Ensuring that shinny players are abiding by the scheduled age groups is both a necessary part of your job and important since it makes skating more enjoyable for everyone. However enforcing ages is hard to do.

Plan ahead and post the schedule. If everyone knows the schedule they won't be surprised when it is their time to step off the ice. If you regularly have trouble with an age group start warning them 10 minutes before their time is up. When you see a person lacing up to go on the ice at 10 minutes before the end of their time, warn them that they will have only a few minutes. Be consistent and fair. Do not cut anyone's time short.

Don't argue: The rules are the rules. So when someone argues, don't enter into it. Tell them to call your supervisor or the city councillor or the mayor and that for now they must follow the present rules.

Use a whistle: Loud, clear, professional.

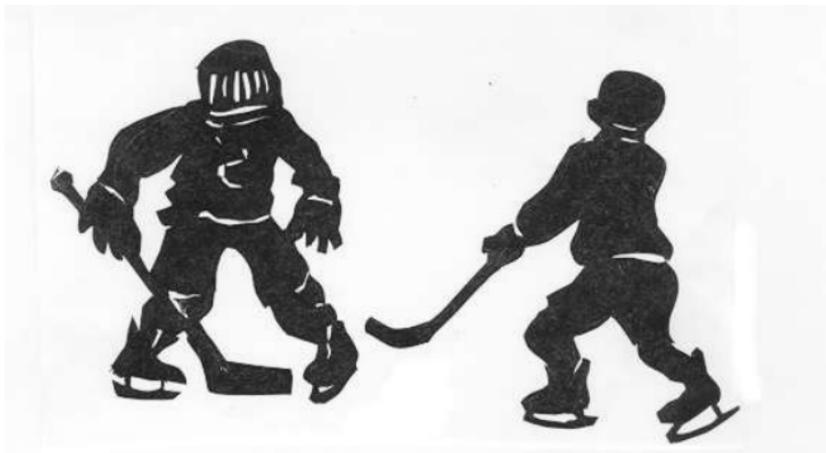
Be a broken record: "The schedule is posted it is now 13-17 year olds you must get off the ice"

Consistency: Enforce the age restriction equally for all age groups. Do not let people sit or hide in the boxes when it is not their time.

How to judge ages: Trust your own assessment and if they complain that you are incorrect, tell them to bring

some ID with a picture and their birth date. All players are either 13 or 14 and can either play in 13 and under or 14 and older, not both. When you are unsure of someone's age, let him or her choose which group to join but they may only join one age group.

Make exceptions in exceptional circumstances: For instance, when the weather is so dreadful that there are only 3 people on the ice, let them play despite the schedule. But tell them that this is a special circumstance and not a precedent and that if someone asks you to enforce the age rule that you will have to.



11. Dealing with problem behaviour



It is important when dealing with problems to maintain a balance between understanding and firmness. It is not kind to allow people to behave badly, or to turn a blind eye. It is also not kind to dismiss people entirely if they behave badly. Post the Code of Conduct prominently, and when people don't follow the rules, address it immediately. Be on the lookout for bullying between young rink users, not only antisocial behaviour toward adults.

- Clearly outline consequences (i.e. how many warnings before someone is going to have to leave and how long they will have to stay away if they are banned).
- Calmly explain what rule is being broken
- Don't let yourself get involved in lengthy arguments.
- If a problem persists make arrangements for the problem people to meet with your supervisor before they may return.
- Remember that kids do grow up and when "problem youth" return the following year they are very likely to be agreeable and reasonable people (much more likely if you treat them that way).

11.1 Rink user Code of Conduct

All members of the community are welcome to skate, play hockey, or meet their friends.

Please observe the following rules so that everyone can enjoy the rink:

- Respect programs and permit times in designated areas.
- Do not use hockey sticks or pucks on the pleasure skating side.
- Leave the ice surface or any other rink area when asked to do so by staff.
- Put garbage in cans, not on the floor.
- Do not smoke in the rink house or on the ice.
- Be considerate of noise levels.
- Do not use foul, offensive or racist language.
- Do not fight or play roughly inside the building or on the rink surface.
- Do not damage anything.

- *In case of a serious disagreement between rink staff and a rink user about any of these rules, the staff may ask the rink user to leave the rink until the matter is discussed with the Recreation Supervisor. If the rink user refuses the staff's request to leave the rink, a letter of trespass may result.*

11.2 How to enforce it

- If possible, even in minor troubles, **try to call another staff person over**, so two of you are there for support.
- **Tell people immediately that they are receiving a warning** and that they will only get one more warning before they are asked to leave.
- If they do not agree to stop their behaviour or if they have been given three warnings **ask them to leave for the day**.
- If they come back after a day and continue to act out explain to them that they are not welcome for the next week.
- If they come back and are still causing trouble ask them to leave for the season. Explain that they can call your supervisor and arrange a meeting to apologize for their actions and do some volunteer hours to show a change of heart. An agreement may be reached that would allow them to come back, if they are respectful.

- If there is more serious trouble, **make SURE another rink staff (or if you are alone, your supervisor) is alerted.** Ask the problem users to leave immediately. If necessary, call the police. If you are forced to call the police, record the officer's information.

- **Follow up!** It is a good idea (although quite difficult) to track anyone arrested through the courts and make sure that the probation officer knows that you have an interest in resolving the problem within the community.

11.3 Kids in trouble

Sometimes a kid who makes trouble is a kid who's in a bad situation, and the rink staff can look out for that.

Get to know the kids in the rink house. Engage and befriend them so that they feel like they can talk to you freely. Also so you'll know a little bit of background – where they live, what their family is like, who they hang around with (all the things you would normally know of your friends).

This way, if they are acting oddly or have not shown up in a long time, you'll notice. If kids are acting out of character, being abusive or rough, looking always tired or sad, ask them directly how they are doing.

Ask those that hang around them, kids, adults, etc...

Call their school to see if they have been in. Connect them with youth services that you know well in the community.

Call children's aid only as a last resort, or the police (if the situation calls for this – talk to your supervisor first).

The main thing is to be aware always and ready to talk to or help any of these kids.

The rink has lots of things to trade. The more you make a kid feel like your rink is a safe place to be, with kind staff, the more you will be in touch with their lives. Food is a good start (a free cookie once in a while), also making small but friendly exceptions for the kids, eg. they can stay in the rink house even if you're locking up, to wait for their ride home.

Getting involved in the running of the rink also helps makes kids feel safe. Involving them in programs and asking them to help out with a few things here and there can go a long way. Very importantly – if these kids get up to no good at your rink – before you ban them, give them many chances to make it up by doing community service hours around the rink. Supervise them closely – that's another chance to help them.

Equally important is *follow-up*. If a youth gets into trouble with the police, follow them through the courts. This is an important way to let them know you are involved with them and care that they are part of a community that is forgiving, supportive and fun to be included in as well.

12. How to be helpful on the Telephone



Do not answer the phone if there is an urgent situation that needs your full attention, otherwise, always answer the telephone when it rings.

Keep basic, useful FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) information for all staff and volunteers near the phone. This kind of information includes:

- **Opening and closing hours** of your rink and the nearest 2 or 3 rinks
- **Ice cleaning schedule** of your rink
- **Schedule of ages and activities** (pleasure or shinny) for your rink and the nearest 2 or 3 rinks.
- **Maps** of how to get to your rink and the nearest other 2 or 3 rinks

Help don't hinder:

It can be tempting to be rude or short on the phone since it invariably interrupts your work. As soon as you are polite and try to help, the caller will usually appreciate your efforts. When you have basic information (phone numbers, maps, opening hours, schedules) posted near the phone you can help quickly and effectively. If you don't have the information they need, offer your best advice but be clear and up front that you are just making a suggestion.

Appendix A: A Note to Rink Users

What to do if there's a problem:

If something at the rink seems amiss – poor ice, maybe, or poor behaviour – here's what can help.

Find the rink staff and talk to him/her about your concern. Explain that you tripped on bad ice in the corner or that you don't want to listen to cursing in the change room. Rink staff need your observations – they can't read your mind. So tell them what bothers you. Ask them to call the ice maintenance crew if you think the ice is unacceptable.

It may be that the rink staff can explain something you didn't realize. Maybe the compressors that freeze the ice are malfunctioning and the mechanic is on his way. Or the rink staff know that a mouthy young guy is not a bad sort and just needs a reminder about his language. Lots of youth don't even notice what they're saying, and they respond to a reminder right away.

The main thing is to **tell the rink staff what you think is wrong**. Canadians are famous for their politeness, which is good. But being silent about your concerns is not as helpful as giving feedback to the staff so they can find solutions.

If the rink staff don't address your problem, you can call the rink supervisor (phone number in appendix C), or you can call your City Councillor. Or you can e-mail rinkissues@dufferinpark.ca, and someone will direct your request to the right person.

If the rink staff *are* helpful and the problem is solved, you can call the supervisor and/or the Councillor anyway, and compliment them on their excellent staff and their stewardship of this public resource. Councillors and management can't read your mind when you're pleased – so passing along your praise in an e-mail or phone call will help them understand what their constituents like.

Families with young children:

If your neighbourhood rink could be better set up for young children, ask the rink staff if you can help make some improvements. A donated bookshelf with some kids' books, a children's table and a few small chairs, a tea kettle with a few boxes of herbal teas may start a trend.

Rinks that are set up for young children tend to get better behaviour from youth. Nobody likes to act mean in front of little kids. The biggest grouch suddenly remembers how to smile when a two-year-old shows up with a mini-stick and a Leaf's jersey. So families with young children are a great resource for a rink.

But if something is bothering your kids, or the washroom diaper-changing place is messy, tell the rink staff. They need your feedback, and your ideas, so they can fix the problems and keep you coming back.

Appendix B: Outdoor Ice Rink Permits

Outdoor rinks have different permit times for playing hockey. Permit times are restricted to the group that has the permit (for \$70 an hour). Some rinks have most of their rink hours available for drop-in shinny hockey, open to anyone, limited only by age of participant, according to the schedule. Other rinks rent out their ice to groups a lot of the time, with only a few hours of public shinny times.

*All permits for the Toronto and East York District, 2006-07, are booked centrally through **City permit officer Nancy Aranha (naranha@toronto.ca - 416-392-0361)**. Applications are considered based on the city's new Permit Allocation Policy. Ice is allocated by using a formula that first categorizes groups into: Community Youth, Competitive Youth, Community Junior Hockey, Community Adult or Commercial. Participant details, such as number and residency, are then used to calculate permit allocation and to collect fees (\$70 an hour for adults).*

Dufferin Rink was previously exempted from central booking, preferring to book one-off (by the hour) permits locally. However, this will end in 2006.

Also, until 2006, if a group of youth got together and asked for a one-hour shinny-hockey permit, that was free at downtown rinks. On-site staff talked to the youth,

encouraged them, and stayed nearby in the rink house in case of problems. However, youth are no longer exempt from permit fees (for now, they pay half the adult fees).

For rinks where youth will no longer be able to organize their own shinny hockey permits due to cost, there are several possibilities. Rink staff can run youth times as a *recreation program* (if the rink staff supervisor agrees), which means that groups can register with the rink staff, form into teams, and play each other, for free. Alternatively, the City Councillor can hold youth shinny games as a free Councillor-run event at any rink in her/his ward. This is a good chance to hit two birds with one stone: give youth more shinny hockey time, and set up a time when the Councillor can get to know some more young people in his ward.

The new permit rules for rinks are meant to address the problem of recreation facilities being “owned” by certain long-time groups with no chance for newcomers to get playing time. To support this aim, rink staff can offer plenty of drop-in programs. Rink staff can further support fairness of use by watching who gets to play shinny hockey. At your rink:

Do women play?

Do families play?

Do beginners get to play?

Do all ages get fair turns?

Do older people get to play, without being run down by hotshots?

If it seems that some groups are not getting enough times to play, staff can call a meeting (with the support of your supervisor) of all the permit holders and all the groups that want a permit but can't get one. Sometimes it's a good idea to let everyone talk together directly – it can produce some surprising solutions.

In double-pad rinks, one way to increase program (non-permit) times for shinny hockey is to allow drop-in shinny hockey on the pleasure pad at the end of pleasure-skating hours (for many rinks that's after 9 or 10 p.m. until the lights go off at 11 p.m.). This game without boards is called “pond-style” shinny hockey. People also play “pond hockey” at all the outdoor rinks without fences, late at night by the light of streetlights or the moon: City Hall, College Park (Barbara Ann Scott), Ryerson, Wallace-Emerson, and Rennie Rinks (pleasure-skating side only). Once every decade or so, by a stroke of good luck, a sudden, prolonged cold snap without snow can turn Grenadier Pond into one gigantic skating rink. Nobody needs to get a permit for that, there's so much space then – but it's rare and unpredictable.

Appendix C: *Important Numbers*

Listed here are some of the important numbers that you may need while operating your community rink. It is also important to compile a comprehensive list of phone numbers as you go and keep a copy near all rink phones. If you have to look a phone number up, add it to your list since you may need that number again in the future.

Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911

Guide to Social Services in Toronto: 211

Police for non-emergencies: 416-808-2222

Water, Hydro & Natural Gas: 905-709-1717

Property Work Order: 416-338-3733

Local 79 Union Office: www.cupelocal79.org
416-977-1629

Children's Aid: 416-924-4646

District Rink Supervisor:

District Recreation Supervisor:

District Parks Supervisor:

Acknowledgments

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