



Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division
Community Recreation Branch
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February 26, 2014

Ms Jutta Mason

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Re: City of Toronto Helmet Policy for Ice Activities

As the manager lead for skating program standards, I am responding to your email to Jim Hart on February 1, 2014.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation's (PFR) guiding principle is to ensure the overall safety of our participants. The goal of the helmet policy for ice activities is to protect children, prevent injury and reduce the risk of serious head injury. Furthermore, the policy was created to improve the quality and safety of our instructional and leisure skate programs by developing appropriate standards and policies around helmet use.

It is our position that ice activities, such as leisure skating and ice hockey, are considered high risk and are connected since the nature of the activities take place on ice. For this reason, the City of Toronto requires children under 6 in leisure skate programs and all participants in ice hockey programs wear Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approved hockey helmets. Canada's Consumer Product Safety Act's ice hockey helmet regulations stipulate that ice hockey helmets meet requirements published by CSA and it is the only certification approved by Hockey Canada. Therefore, a CSA approved hockey helmet is the standard used for ice activities to help protect against head injuries occurring on ice and to reduce the risk of more serious injuries from occurring.

When the policy was first developed PFR consulted with the City's Risk Management and Legal staff. We reviewed Ontario Recreation and Facility Association's guidelines, standards from Hockey Canada, Skate Canada and other governing bodies of sport organizations. A thorough review of the helmet policy and extensive research conducted in 2010 supports the current policy. PFR will continue to make the use of CSA approved hockey helmets mandatory for ice activities.

In 2009-2010, PFR surveyed leisure skate participants and 81 per cent of those surveyed supported the policy. Over 73 per cent of respondents indicated that they comply with the policy, and 69 per cent of respondents felt that helmets were not a barrier to participation.

Cities in Ontario like Burlington, London, Oshawa and Ottawa, plus numerous cities in different provinces, like Moncton, throughout Canada make it mandatory for children to wear CSA approved hockey helmets during public skate activities.

Attached to this email you will find the information and research that was collected to assist us with the development and review of the helmet policy.

Thank you for your suggestions.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kel Seow".

Kelvin Seow
Manager, Community Recreation
Scarborough District