



# Spokane County Department of Emergency Management



Emergency Coordination Center  
Joint Press Release



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## Spokane County Health Officer Order Limits Play Structure Use during COVID-19

**Spokane, Wash** - Today, the Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) issued an order for the closure of all play structures. This follows the [Washington statewide emergency proclamation](#) signed by Governor Inslee on March 16, temporarily shutting down restaurants, bars, recreational and entertainment facilities until at least March 31.

“Our joint focus remains on supporting the health and well-being of our community,” said Dr. Bob Lutz, Spokane County Health Officer with SRHD. “Our goal continues to be slowing the spread of COVID-19 in the Spokane region.”

The order includes the closure of all play structures including equipment for use by children ages six months through 12 years in playground areas and equipment for all ages such as outdoor workout activity stations, of:

- Commercial (non-residential) child care facilities
- Institutions
- Multiple family dwellings, such as apartment and condominium buildings
- Parks, such as city, state, and community (e.g. HOA) maintained parks
- Restaurants
- Resorts and recreational developments
- Schools
- Other areas of public use

The order does not include the following:

- Tennis / Pickleball Courts
- Skate Parks
- Golf Courses
- Trails
- Sports fields
- Open Space / Natural Areas
- Parks (grass areas, walking paths)
- ORV Parks
- Benches and picnic tables

- Spray Pads and other interactive spray and water features / equipment within an aquatic facility pool.

“It is important that you and your families stay healthy by getting outdoors, playing and using the green space our parks provide,” explained Dr. Lutz. “We do need to continue to take the steps necessary by practicing social distancing and limiting our exposure to public places where the virus can be transmitted, and that includes play structures and equipment.”

Under the current order, green space, parks, trails and natural areas remain open for public use at this time.

Health officials urge the public to follow the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s \(CDC\) guidelines on how to stop the spread of germs](#) when choosing to use these recreational spaces. Maintain at least six feet of social distance, and use them with 10 or fewer people. Use hand sanitizer/wash your hands before and after use of public spaces. Avoid using these spaces if you’re sick or have symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with someone who is.

Spokane County Parks Director Doug Chase further emphasized the value of parks and outdoor spaces in Spokane County, “We live here, because we love the natural beauty and recreation that Spokane provides. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to disinfect, multiple times per day, all handrails, dog waste stations, and restrooms across our County.”

Please follow the CDC guidelines when using these recreational spaces, to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Park officials say some restrooms may be closed, and ask for the community’s understanding at this time.

County and city park officials explained that they explored placing hand sanitizing stations at recreational locations. However, with the high demand on cleaning and sanitation resources, they wanted to ensure the highest and best use of those products is available for health care and vulnerable populations.

[View the National Recreation and Park Association statement on using parks and open space while maintaining social distancing.](#)

The public is asked to remain home if they are sick or experiencing symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone experiencing symptoms.

- Visit the [Spokane Regional Health District’s COVID-19 page](#) for a full list of resources.
- Please follow the [CDC’s guidelines on how to stop the spread of germs](#).

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