

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Lake Stevens to close playgrounds due to safety concerns *Community invited to meeting March 2 to learn more*

LAKE STEVENS, WASH. – Due to safety concerns, the City of Lake Stevens Parks and Recreation Department is closing five playgrounds effective February 22. Four of these playgrounds will be removed, the other one will need to have significant repairs made prior to reopening.

Several additional playgrounds also need repairs, although they will stay open to the public. Most of the playgrounds needing repair are 15 to 22 years old and are smaller in size and located in residential neighborhoods. The closed playgrounds will have temporary orange fencing installed and signs posted to let the public know if it will be removed or repaired.

There is one playground that was recently installed in 2020 at Oak Hill Park, also known as The Timbers. Unfortunately, this playground is not designed for installation in a public park, even though it is advertised as commercial grade. The park has structural issues, which may be due to installation or the manufacturer process. Additionally, play elements are designed too close together and the structure does not meet ADA Accessibility Standards. This type of playground is not allowed for public use.

“It is always a tough decision to shut down a playground, especially several of them at the same time,” says Parks and Recreation Director Sarah Garceau. “Children’s safety is extremely important, and these playgrounds do not meet standards.”

All city playgrounds are now scheduled for regular inspections to ensure they remain in good condition.

There are things that families can do to keep kids safe while enjoying playgrounds. Adults should visually check the playground that their child is playing on and report anything they see that is loose or that needs repair. While playing on playgrounds, children should never wear bike helmets, hoodies or other clothing pieces with strings. Adults should also make sure that their children are only playing on playgrounds that are designed for their age group.

Two employees in the Parks Department are Certified Playground Safety Inspectors (CPSI), and two additional employees are expected to become certified by summer 2023. One employee is also a Playground Maintenance Technician (PMT). Both the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and American Society for Testing and Materials International (ASTMI) have guidelines and standards for public playgrounds. The guidelines and standards are designed to reduce the number and severity of accidents on public use playgrounds designed for ages 2-5 and 5-12.

The city created an official Parks and Recreation Department in August 2022. All of the city’s parks received a full walkthrough and have been inspected; maintenance and repair lists have been created and are actively being worked on to ensure our parks are safe, clean, and enjoyable for the public.

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All community members are invited to attend a public meeting in the Sawyers Room at The Mill on Thursday, March 2 at 6 pm to discuss playgrounds. This will be the first of many public meetings scheduled to discuss the City's parks and ensure that the recreational needs of our community are met. The Parks Department encourages all community members to attend meetings or watch them on YouTube when you can't attend in person. Your comments and feedback are very important in deciding the future of parks.

Below is a list of playgrounds and the status of each of them. For questions, concerns or comments you can email parks@lakestevenswa.gov or call (425) 622-9403.

Park	Address	Status
Mandolin Court	Next to 3104 Mandolin Ct	Closed. Remove.
Summer Hill Estates	Next to 11318 36th ST NE	Closed. Remove.
The Reserve 2	Next to 502 125th Ave NE	Closed. Remove.
Oak Hill	10300 33rd St NE	Closed. Remove.
Greenwood Village 2	Next to 12305 4th St NE	Closed. Reopen after repairs are made.
Baker Vista	Across from 3315 116th Ave NE	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
Bryce Park	Next to 3403 Bryce Dr	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
The Reserve	Next to 603 125th Ave NE	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
The Reserve 3	Next to 639 125 th Ave NE	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
Crossings at Catherine Creek	Across 2902 127th Ave NE	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
Timberlake / Jakes Place	Across 13027 12th Pl NE	Repairs are needed, will stay open.
Frontier Heights	8801 Frontier Circle	Open.
Lundeen Park	10020 Lundeen Pkwy	Open.
North Cove Park	1806 Main Street	Open.

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The city of Lake Stevens, Wash. (pop. 40,700) is located 36 miles north of Seattle in Snohomish County. The city shares the name of the lake it surrounds and is nestled between the beautiful Cascade Range and Puget Sound. The city's vision is to be "one community around the lake" with a vibrant economy, modern infrastructure, and exceptional quality of life for residents and businesses alike. More information about Lake Stevens can be found at www.lakestevenswa.gov.