

Guide to building and maintaining a community backyard rink on municipal land

Overview: This guide provides steps for setting up and maintaining a community backyard rink on municipal land. It's designed to help you create enjoyable and safe ice rinks for public use.

Getting started

To receive approval on your community backyard rink on municipal land, the following criteria should be met:

Commitment: Daily maintenance is needed. Ensure you have enough time to maintain the condition of the rink to ensure safety and consistent ice conditions.

Designated contact: Designate a main contact who will act as the contact for the Municipality throughout the application process, and the duration of the rink's operations, including signing necessary documents.

Volunteers: At least two volunteers (including the applicant) are needed to help with rink maintenance.

Site requirements:

- Flat and level surface
- Free from hazards like utility right of ways and avoiding areas with obstacles or near roadways.
- Accessible to the public
- Not on recreational fields, designated paths, or storm ponds
- The closer the rink is to a water source, the better. If this is not possible, you may need to arrange permits for water truck access. (you'll need access throughout the season)
- Ensure you have somewhere to store equipment as needed.
- Ensure the site allows for emergency vehicle access.

Materials: Gather tools and supplies such as boards, reflective tape, and liners.

Insurance: Appropriate insurance is required to operate a rink. Applicants will be required to accept the Municipality's insurance terms, including being named as an additional insured, under the Municipality's policy. Review the full information on insurance requirements in the policy document [\[link\]](#).



Approval process

1. Form a volunteer group and appoint a designated contact.
2. Submit an online application at rmwb.ca/CommunityRinks
3. The Municipality will review the application and provide a decision.
4. If approved, the rink owner / applicant must enter a License of Occupation (LOC) to utilize the municipal land.
5. Start building the rink after the LOC has been signed.
6. Initial inspection once construction is complete, and prior to use.
7. Install waiver of liability signage provided by the Municipality.

Building and maintenance

Prepping the rink

- Wear appropriate clothing and ice cleats.
- Inspect and clean the area, removing debris.

Building snowbanks/ borders

- Push snow to the rink edges, leaving a 2-inch layer for flooding.
- Snowbanks should be compacted and at least 1 ft high and 2 ft wide.
- Rink boards should be no higher than 4 ft with reflective tape on top.

Flooding

- Compact snow and smooth the surface.
- Flood when temperatures are consistently below -7°C.
- Use volunteers to manage flooding and ensure even application.
- Allow ice to freeze between floods for a solid base.

Ice maintenance

- Perform light resurfacing floods as needed.
- Remove snow, bumps, and debris promptly.
- Avoid flooding on windy days.

Fixing chips

- Break up ice, remove debris, and fill gaps with slush.
- Pack down and level out before letting it freeze.

Set up and removal

- The rink should be constructed by December 31.
- Install and dismantle boards as needed.
- Remove all equipment by the end of March and restore the site to original state.



Responsibilities

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's responsibilities

- Assist with the application process
- Provide waiver signage and conduct two inspections (initial and final)
- Offer advice on maintenance
- Serve as a contact for questions or concerns
- Inspect sites and completed rinks
- Process License of Occupation (LOC)

Applicant and volunteer responsibilities

- Follow the guide's procedures
- Ensure daily maintenance and supervision
- Control and clean up garbage
- Allow community access
- Follow procedures for incidents and emergencies

Usage guidelines

- The use of CSA helmets is advisable, and children must be supervised
- Rinks can be used between 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- Use the rink at your own risk
- Be respectful of neighbours and keep the area clean

In case of incident

- Call Pulse at 780-743-7000 for assistance. Provide details including your name, the rink address, and the issue
- For medical emergencies, call 9-1-1

