

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

CITY INSPECTING AMUSEMENT RIDES AT STREET FAIRS AND BLOCK PARTIES TO ENSURE SAFE SUMMER

Agencies Remind Operators of Licensing Requirements and Issues Parent Safety Tips to Ensure Summer Season is Fun and Safe

The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and Department of Buildings (DOB) today kicked off the summer season with a reminder for ride operators and event organizers: all rides at popular street fairs, block parties, and carnivals need to be licensed and safe. DCA and DOB are inspecting amusement rides at events citywide throughout the summer to prevent serious safety risks. DCA will also post a list of licensed rides online at www.nyc.gov/consumers. The announcement was made at St. Athanasius Church in Brooklyn, where rides got a full inspection in preparation for its annual week-long carnival fair and feast.

Temporary rides including, but not limited to, Ferris Wheels, Swings, Tilt-a-Whirls, and Carousels, that are erected for each special event, street fair or block party must be licensed by the DCA and pass inspection by the DOB's Elevator Division each time they relocate. Operators of popular inflatable bouncers and slides, like the Moonwalk or Super Slide, must also be licensed and comply with standard manufacturer's safety requirements, as well as properly secure each ride. So far this season, the DCA has processed more than 160 applications for temporary and inflatable rides at street fairs, carnivals, or block parties. DOB inspectors will perform more than 2,000 total inspections during the amusement park/carnival season, including unannounced spot checks. DCA and DOB have improved efficiencies, and beginning this summer season, will process license applications and inspections within 12 days before an event, instead of the previously required 15.

"Street fairs and block parties are New York summer pastimes, but rides need to be licensed, safe, and secure," said Consumer Affairs Acting Commissioner Jonathan Mintz. "Getting a license is easier than ever, and provides both parents and event organizers with peace of mind that rides have been inspected and are insured. Operators can get license applications by calling 311 or by going online."

"Last year, the amusement ride season was both fun and safe, thanks to the cooperation of the rider vendors and operators, and the agencies that regulate them – the Department of Buildings and the Department of Consumer Affairs. We hope to get this year off to another great, safe start so that everyone can enjoy New York City's street fairs, block parties and carnivals," said Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, FAIA.

"We share the same common goal of making the industry safer; and licensing rides helps ensure that," said Scott Weisberg of R.O.A.R. (Responsible Operators of Amusement Rentals), and owner of Scott's Magic and Entertainment Company. "It's crucial that ride operators be licensed, trained, insured, and tether equipment properly."

All operators for portable amusement rides are required to have a one-year license

from the DCA and carry appropriate insurance. Truck-mounted rides must pass inspection by the DOB's Elevator Division. Operators who operate without a license face maximum penalties of \$100 per day of unlicensed activity, and rides without a license must be taken down.

Complete license applications, and safety tips from the DOB, are available by calling 311 within New York City, 212-NEW-YORK outside, or on the DCA web site at www.nyc.gov/consumers. The Mayor's Community Assistance Unit (CAU) issues permits for street fairs and block parties throughout the City, and more information can be found at www.nyc.gov/cau.

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AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY TIPS

Each year, specially trained inspectors from the Department of Buildings check the condition and operation of each amusement ride in New York City. With the help of this inspection team, we have compiled a list of amusement ride safety tips.

- Before getting on any ride, always take a moment to look it over. If something does not appear normal or if the ride looks unsafe in any way, DO NOT GET ON IT. Immediately notify the operator of the ride, or if necessary, the police.
- Take notice of the condition of the ride operator. If the operator seems unknowledgeable or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, immediately alert the manager of the amusement park or carnival, or if necessary, the police. DO NOT GET ON THE RIDE.
- Before getting on a ride, carefully read the height, weight and medical restrictions. Anyone who does not meet the required specifications is not allowed on the ride. Read any instructions on what to do while the ride is in motion and follow the directions given by the operator.
- After being fastened into the ride, check the restraints (seat belts, shoulder harnesses, etc.) by pushing and pulling on them to make sure they are adequately secured. If you are accompanying a child, check the condition of his/her restraints as well. If any defects are noticed or the restraints do not seem properly secured, notify the operator before the ride begins.
- An adult should always accompany young children. Never attempt to force a frightened child onto a ride. When watching a child on a ride, never attempt to lean over the railing or fence to touch him/her.
- Keep your head, hands, arms, legs and feet inside the ride at all times.
- Watch your step when entering or exiting a ride. Always walk slowly and be aware of any uneven ground or wire crossings when you step off the device.
- Some rides can make you dizzy. Hold onto the handrails, especially when exiting.
- Rowdiness and excessive play are STRICTLY PROHIBITED on all rides.
- NEVER stand up or exit a ride while it is in motion. Remain fastened in your seat until the ride comes to a complete stop.
- NEVER get on a ride while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, follow the instructions of the ride operator and emergency personnel.