



CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION, INC. PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW JERSEY REGULATING CLIMBING GYMS

Seattle, WA, 6/15/2004 – Recently an issue regarding climbing wall operations has come up that may affect everyone in this industry. The issue is whether the manner in which a wall operator manages a climbing wall can be construed as an amusement park activity. Laws vary from state to state, but a recent incident in New Jersey brought this issue to the fore-front. The operator of the climbing wall was shut down because the state determined that the activity was amusement park oriented.

Based upon information we have received from other sources, the state of New Jersey issued an "Application for Type Certification" to be completed by the "Ride Manufacturer". The application included questions about ASTM Standards, non-destructive testing, height, weight restrictions, design of ride certification signed and sealed by a licensed professional engineer, one set of drawings compliant with local codes - signed by an engineer, and many more requirements set forth by the amusement licensing statute and amusement industry regulations.

This is a big concern within the climbing wall industry and the CWA is taking this issue on on behalf of its members. The CWA differentiates climbing wall activities from amusement park activities based on, among other things, the type of use of the facility, and the training and testing processes that a customer must go through before he or she engages in any climbing activity. This process is identified in the Industry Practices and focuses on things such as notification regarding the inherent risks of climbing, the use of a participant agreement, qualified instruction, and a demonstration of competency in climbing and belaying skills.

Climbing wall operators should be careful with issues such as "quickie" belay orientations, access to auto-belays and how the staff presents the climbing wall to the customer.

The New Jersey incident is one recent example of how climbing walls and related activities are being associated with the amusement park industry. The CWA plans to follow these issues and report on any new developments.

The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, industry trade association for manufacturers of climbing wall equipment, builders of climbing walls, operators of climbing facilities, and others involved in the climbing gym industry. Our mission involves providing services, standards, support, and

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advocacy for our members. The CWA offers standards for the operation of climbing walls, an insurance program for climbing facilities, and risk management consulting for member organizations.

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