



CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION, INC. PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OHIO CLIMBING GYM NOT SUBJECT TO LICENSURE

Boulder, Colorado, 05/24/2005 – William Hopper, Chief Legal Counsel for the Ohio Department of Agriculture determined that Vertical Adventures, Inc. an indoor climbing facility in Columbus, Ohio is “not an amusement ride as defined under Chapter 1711. of the Ohio Revised Code, and therefore will not require licensing.” The Ohio Department of Agriculture proposed inspecting and licensing Vertical Adventures indoor climbing facility as an amusement ride this past spring. A number of states including Ohio and Missouri have chosen to regulate portable climbing walls, climbing walls, and climbing gyms as amusement rides or devices in recent years as a result of a relatively small number of accidents involving artificial climbing walls.

Alexis Roccas, Vertical Adventures’ owner, contacted the Climbing Wall Association, Inc. for advice about the issue, which many climbing gyms are beginning to face. The CWA advised Mr. Roccas to consult an attorney prior to submitting to inspection and licensure. The position of the Climbing Wall Association is that regulating a climbing gym, such as Vertical Adventures, as an amusement ride or device is inappropriate for a number of reasons. The CWA’s position is that indoor climbing is a sport, a human-powered recreational activity, not an amusement ride or device.

Mr. Roccas engaged Robert Angell, an attorney in the Columbus area, to review the case, provide an analysis of the statute, and assert the claim that Vertical Adventures indoor climbing facility was not an amusement ride and not subject to inspection and licensure. The CWA provided a written opinion to Robert Angell regarding the issues involved. Mr. Angell ultimately determined that “Vertical Adventures does not fall under the ambit of the pertinent statute and rules, and is thus not subject to regulation as an amusement ride or device.” After a number of exchanges between Robert Angell and William Hopper, and a letter of support for Vertical Adventures from the CWA, the Department of Agriculture agreed with Vertical Adventures’ claim.

The CWA is a 501(c)(06), non-profit, industry trade association for manufacturers of climbing wall equipment, builders of climbing walls, operators of commercial climbing gyms, and others involved in the climbing gym industry. Our mission involves providing services, standards, support, and advocacy for our members. The CWA offers standards for the operation of climbing walls, standards-based training for the staff of climbing gyms, and risk management consulting for member organizations.

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