

BLEACHER INSPECTIONS

Inspections are key to bleacher safety. Failure to inspect your bleachers can do harm to your guests and expose your District to unnecessary liability.

2000 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101 Life Safety Code recommends:

"annual inspections and maintenance of bleacher/grandstand or folding/telescopic seating required to be provided by owner to ensure safety conditions. Biennially, the inspection is to be performed by a professional engineer, registered architect or individual certified by the manufacturer."

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends:

"that bleachers be inspected at least quarterly (by district staff) to identify any structural damage or degradation that could compromise safety." "The biennial inspection should be performed by a professional engineer, registered architect or individual certified by the manufacturer and provide written certification that the bleachers are fit for use."

SDIS recommends:

- Bleachers five tiers high or less need to be inspected by district staff quarterly with **documented findings**.
- Bleachers more than five tiers high need to be inspected by district staff quarterly with **documented findings** in addition to biennially by a professional engineer, registered architect or individual certified by the manufacturer, showing the bleachers are fit for use.

The following is a list of items/conditions that can be used to create a checklist template for the quarterly documented inspections. Visually and physically check:

- Nuts and bolts on the bleachers to make sure they are not loose, missing or protruding.
- Guardrails to see if they are loose or missing.
- Plank or railing end caps to make sure they are not loose or missing.
- Wooden planks for worn out or splintered areas.
- Hazardous protrusions or sharp edges.
- Spacing between rows when seating is in the "stacked" or "closed" position. Uneven spacing can result in damage and misalignment.
- Wall ties are securely attached to both the wall and the unit. For floor attached units, floor anchors should be tight and firm.
- Welds on the footboard support brackets. Broken welds must be re-welded.
- All moving parts. Lubricate footboard support channels and support post guides with a good grade of high-temperature bearing lubricant. Wipe off excess to avoid floor staining or damage.
- Visible rust. Remove rust before it eventually weakens structural members. Touch up affected areas with paint to match original paint.
- Slide stop on footboard support arm. A broken stop will result in the unit extending beyond the normal position, causing structural damage.

