Ecowood Solutions
***PlayZone* Engineered Wood Fiber**
Playground Safety Surfacing Installation Instructions

Overview:

The Consumer Product Safety Commission Publication #325 presents the most uniformly accepted standards for playground safety surfacing installation, and we recommend that customers familiarize themselves with its guidelines on all aspects of playground safety.

PlayZone, our engineered wood fiber playground safety surfacing is a pure, natural wood product made from pine and oak, which is specifically manufactured for playground usage.

Do not mix or substitute other wood mulch products with the playground surfacing. They do not provide the impact attenuation necessary for playground usage.

Selecting a playground area:

Good drainage is essential to establishing and maintaining a playground in top condition. Any location that collects standing rainwater is not suitable. Choose a location that drains readily.

Refer to the instructions which come with each component of your playground equipment, or refer to the Consumer Product Safety Publication #325 to determine how to situate your play equipment safely away from fences, trees, walls or other potential hazards, and away from other play structures. Each piece of play equipment will specify its specific „Fall Zone", calculated to its dimensions and height. Read the Fall Zone requirements for each piece of equipment before purchasing or attempting to install it, to make sure you have enough room to put it into place.

A professional playground installer is typically the best resource to assist the homeowner, daycare manager, or anyone else who is not familiar with installation guidelines.

Preparing the Area:

Remove all vegetation, rocks, roots and other protrusions to bare soil. Grade and level so that the area drains consistently and quickly after a rain. Do not use herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, or any other chemicals. Avoid using land that has been treated with chemicals in the past.

The wood fiber material should be contained within borders which meet safety standards designated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Railroad ties are not suitable, neither is any kind of lumber which has been treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA). A professional playground installer can guide the consumer to the purchase of proper border materials. A border is essential to keep the wood fiber in place and at its proper depth.

Determining depth of material:

We recommend 12" (twelve inch) compacted depth of wood fiber surfacing for all public play areas. "Compacted depth" takes into account the natural settling of wood fiber products. Our wood fiber compacts at a uniform 25%. Maximum practical impact attenuation is achieved with 12" (twelve inch) compacted depth of material, and this is the standard we recommend for all public play areas. This is also referred to as 15" „straight" (non-compacted) depth.

Installing playground surfacing:

Level and grade the open ground, removing all rocks, roots or other protrusions. Wood fiber mulch will provide the necessary impact attenuation with or without underlayment. Geotextile Fabric (also called "weed guard" or "weed barrier") does, however, provide improved drainage and longevity of the wood fiber. At Riverside Ranch, LLC we do carry geotextile fabric material as a courtesy to our customers who wish to use it in the design of their playground, although we do not sell it separately. When calling for an estimate or to place an order, please discuss with us whether your designated area will require geotextile.

This material improves the longevity of a playground, but does not influence impact attenuation, which is a function of the wood fiber itself.

Geotextile is installed by laying it to overlap it at the edges, and by bringing it up as a "lip" up the side of the border. It thus creates a sort of "shallow bowl" shaped container to hold the engineered wood fiber. The geotextile we currently carry is 15" (fifteen feet) in width. We calculate the amount needed by multiplying the square footage of the play area by an additional 10% (ten percent) for overlap and lip. This figure is then brought up to the next figure divisible by 15 (to accommodate the width) to give the square footage of the appropriate dimension of geotextile to purchase. The geotextile is sold either by the full roll for large playgrounds, or by the square foot in most cases. It is provided to the customer in a contiguous length, which the customer then cuts to fit as he lays it in place. Geotextile can be cut with household scissors, and requires no special tools. It „handles" like a heavy felt fabric.

Spread the playground surfacing evenly into the play area with shovels and rakes, either on the prepared sand or soil, or into the laid-out geotextile. Make sure there are no thin, shallow places lacking in wood fiber, which would cause it to fall short of providing sufficient impact attenuation.

We do not recommend placing playground surfacing over any sort of asphalt or pavement area, and specifically caution against it. We do recommend placing it upon sand, pea gravel, or properly prepared soil.

Spread the material to a uniform thickness to the appropriate depth. Take care when transporting the material to use only clean, chemical-free, grease-free wheelbarrows and tools.

Do not use any pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides on the wood fiber, except under the care of a licensed, bonded, professional exterminator or horticulturalist who is fully aware that this is a play area used by children as compared to a landscape area. Products that may be generally accepted as safe for lawn and garden use may not be safe for playground use. We do not endorse the use of any chemicals whatsoever on our wood mulch.

Our wood fiber has excellent drainage and longevity due to the removal of loose sawdust which holds moisture. It features the natural antimicrobial and antibacterial characteristics of both pine (aromatic resins) and oak (tannins) in its composition.

Maintenance:

Our playground wood fiber settles naturally into a stable play surface, but with use the material will most likely shift around. We recommend weekly inspection and maintenance under high-traffic toys, such as slides and swings, to make sure that the material has not been kicked out or ground down in those places.

Wear mats designed specifically for use under playground structures are available through professional playground installers, and can help to keep down material loss.

Weekly inspection should also be done to remove any foreign object from the play area. Fallen branches, toys, or other objects could get worked down into the wood fiber and present an unseen potential hazard if not removed. Rakes or shovels may be used to move additional material into any worn down areas, taking it from lower traffic areas where it has not compacted.

Depending upon climate and usage, the material may need to be “topped off” with fresh playground surfacing at any time, but typically from every 2 (two) to 5 (five) years. In arid climates, the material may maintain its depth and integrity even longer.

To determine if a playground needs additional material, first rake or shovel it into an even surface, filling in the highest traffic areas such as under swings and slides. Measure the overall surface of the playground at several places, and if the overall depth is less than the recommended depth for its usage, then we recommend topping off the playground with additional material. Determine how many inches short of the necessary depth that figure comes to and that is the amount you need to add.

Depending upon climate and drainage, under some circumstances when the material is frequently waterlogged, it may be necessary to remove the remaining material and completely replace it fresh. As a natural wood fiber, our playground surfacing will eventually decompose if left wet for long periods of time, and this factor is part of its

natural life span. It remains a useful and wholesome product, but no longer provides the impact attenuation necessary for playground use.

At that time, the broken down mulch may then be recycled by applying it elsewhere such as around trees, or in flower beds, or for use in composting, thus not going to waste.

Contaminants:

Freshly manufactured Riverside Ranch, LLC engineered wood fiber is a clean, pleasant, inert product which is as safe and natural as lumber at a lumberyard. Vigilant awareness of potential contamination will maintain its wholesome qualities.

From time to time the playground material may receive contamination. The response to the contamination depends entirely upon what has infiltrated the playground area.

Keep all pets and stray animals out of the playground. Animal feces and urine present a potential health hazard. Remove any playground material that has been in proximity to animal waste and discard it.

Soft drink spills or food can attract ants. Remove and discard any playground mulch with soft drink residue or food contamination.

Broken glass, small toys, sticks, rocks, soft drink cans all present potential hazards which could get buried into the mulch, and which need to be removed. Again, weekly inspection of the playground, both surfacing and structures, is important to maintain safety.

If trees overshadow the play area, take care to remove any nuts or branches which fall into it. Fallen leaves generally present no harm, but dense covering of leaves may hold in moisture which could shorten the longevity of the playground surfacing.

Any sort of grease, motor oil, or other automotive-type chemical presents a significant hazard, and would require the complete removal of any material in contact with it.

Our playground surfacing material arrives fresh and clean. Frequent inspection and tidying up will keep it pristine for years of healthy play.

Contact Us:

We are here to assist you with any questions you may have regarding the proper installation, usage, and maintenance of our engineered wood fiber playground safety surfacing.

For product information visit www.ECOWOODSOLUTIONS.com or call (405)-360-7300.