



Risk Management Considerations for Riding the Resurfacer

If you've ever been to a hockey game, you've most likely thought about what it would be like to ride the ice resurfacer. You're not alone. It is a prized experience, so much so that some arenas reward spectators or contest winners with a trip around the rink as a passenger.

It is recommended that you take a close look at your risk exposures before allowing anyone other than employees on the ice resurfacer.

The machine is not designed as a passenger carrying vehicle. There is only one seat and that one seat may or may not have a seat belt, let alone one for a passenger. One seat means that any passenger will have to stand beside the operator or, if small enough, sit on the driver's lap. This could potentially impede safe operation of the resurfacer.

A child, presented with the chance to ride the resurfacer, might become excitable and hard to control. Given the lack of seat belts, they could jump or fall from the vehicle and become seriously injured.

Arena employees are taught how to operate the resurfacer in a controlled environment, on a closed ice surface with little distraction. A crowd, a passenger and excitement could culminate into a disastrous situation.

Passengers should not be exposed to a relatively dangerous work area. There are serious consequences should a mishap occur:

- The Ministry of Labour would likely investigate.
- The driver could face large fines (which they must pay personally, and, by law, may not be reimbursed for).
- The public fallout from an injured child.
- Potential litigation against the operator, hockey club, manager of the facility, board and council.

Given that the cons associated with riding the resurfacer far outweigh pros, it is recommended that municipalities ban the practice of allowing passengers to ride on ice resurfacers.

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