

Zip Line Guidance

March 1, 2017

To help ensure the safety of zip line riders in Michigan, line operators are now required to obtain a permit and their rides must be inspected. Zip lines are subject to regulation under the Michigan Carnival-Amusement Safety Act as a “carnival or amusement ride”. This guidance is issued pursuant to MCL 408.665 to eliminate unnecessary hardship for current zip line operators.

Definitions

- “Carnival or amusement ride” - a device that carries or conveys passengers along, around, or over a fixed or restricted route or course for the purpose of giving its passengers amusement, pleasure, thrills, or excitement.
- “Zip line” - an aerial adventure course element over an open span consisting of an inclined wire or fiber rope on which patron(s) are suspended from a pulley or trolley and are able to traverse with the primary force for propulsion being gravity.

Act, Rules and Standards

- Carnival-Amusement Safety Act, Act 225 of 1966 (408.651 – 408.671)
- Carnival-Amusement Safety General Rules (R 408.801- 408.898)

The following standards will apply to zip lines:

- ASTM Standards on Amusement Rides and Devices, ASTM F24 7th Edition Compendium, 2004
- ASTM F2959-16 Standard Practice for Aerial Adventure Courses
- ANSI/ACCT 03-2016 Challenge Courses and Canopy/Zip Line Tours Standards

Exemptions

The following installations are exempt from these requirements:

- Zip lines that are operated at a private residence.
- Zip lines that are operated exclusively as playground equipment covered by ASTM Consumer Safety Performance Specification F1487.

Application and Submissions

The application for a permit to operate zip lines is the Application for Authorization to Operate an Amusement Ride and Prepayment of Annual Inspection Fees form (CSCL/LCR-100 (02/17)), available from "Forms and Publications" at www.michigan.gov/amusement.

It requires the following to be submitted with the initial application and for any new or changed zip lines:

1. List of rides including serial number or NA, type of ride (aerial, kiddie, coaster, adult or zip line) and prior Permanent I.D. # (if applicable).

2. Fees

The permit fee is \$10 for each zip line. In addition, there is a \$5 fee for a special inspector for each company and a \$50 inspection fee for each zip line, unless a less than 12-month old third-party inspection report is submitted with the application, refer to the "Third-Party Inspection" section, below.

3. Plans or diagrams of each new ride not type-certified in Michigan

A certification by a professional engineer licensed by an American state, or by a recognized and insured manufacturer/builder, or by an ACCT Qualified Course Professional Designer.

This certification is to include rise and run and specifications for loading and landing, limitations and requirements – users and use, tension/sag limits, rope and rope accessories, anchorages, arborist's report where trees are used, harnesses, trolleys, brakes and stops.

Exception: Zip line designs may qualify as "previously compliant" for five years following the commencement of regulation of zip lines in Michigan, March 1, 2017. Thereafter, a zip line design must qualify as "service proven" as defined in ASTM Practice F2291 or meet the design requirements of this guidance. This is documented by the submission of an inspection report dated within the last 12-months that complies with the Inspection section of this Guidance.

This act does not prevent the use of any existing carnival-amusement ride if an inspection finds that the ride is in a safe condition and conforms to the rules of the department.

4. Inspection report

Dated within the last 12-months that complies with the Inspection section of this Guidance.

5. Copy of Certificate of Insurance or bond

Proof of a policy of insurance or a surety bond in an amount not less than \$300,000.00 with State of Michigan, PO Box 30018, Lansing, MI 48909, listed as the certificate holder.

6. Special Inspector names

A special inspector or their delegate(s) is responsible for daily inspections and reports of the zip line for safety purposes.

7. Routing schedule

For mobile operations, a routing schedule identifying the rides intended for operation and the dates and locations where they will be used.

A permit will be issued in the first year allowing operation of the device until the inspection(s) are completed and/or accepted by LARA.

Inspections

Initial and annual inspections may be performed by an approved inspector.

The inspector must be qualified by training, such as attainment of Level II certification from the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO), attainment of Level II certification from Amusement Industry Manufacturers and Suppliers International (AIMS), attainment of a qualified inspector certification from the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT), or an organization or individual certified or accredited by the Professional Ropes Course Association (PRCA). An individual or organization meeting these qualifications will be considered an approved inspector. Inspections provided by operators completed by individuals or organizations meeting these qualifications will be reviewed for acceptance by the Department. If accepted a state inspection will not be required. State inspection fees will be refunded when applicable.

The Department retains the right to inspect zip lines regardless of acceptance of a 3rd party inspection.

Renewals

Permits expire annually on March 1st. Renewal notices are mailed out approximately 60 days prior to the expiration.

The renewal fee for each zip line is \$60.00 (\$10.00 permit fee and \$50.00 inspection fee). Submit an inspection report dated within the last 12-months with the permit renewal. The special inspector commission also expires on March 1st. The special inspector commission renewal fee is \$5.00. State inspection fees will be refunded when applicable.

Other documents required at renewal time are a list of the inspectors responsible for the daily inspection of your device(s), a current certificate of insurance, and a routing schedule identifying the rides intended for operation and the dates and locations where they will be used, if your zip line is a mobile device.

Your zip line may continue to operate on the previous year's permit until inspection/permit issuance for the current year.

Operation

Operators should be cognizant of the law and regulations. Take close note of signage requirements and injury reporting.