

# Movable Soccer Goals: A Continued Danger to Students

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There is a danger lurking on playing fields in Colorado. A problem that schools, soccer organizations and park and recreation districts should be aware of. It is an issue that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has addressed on multiple occasions with warnings and guidelines. The danger is moveable soccer goals tipping over and seriously injuring or even killing people on fields with alarming regularity. It is a problem that is relatively simple to remedy yet has proved much more challenging to eliminate.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), movable soccer goals can fall over and kill or injure children who climb on them or hang from the crossbar. The CPSC has reports of at least 36 deaths since 1979 resulting from soccer goals falling over. Both homemade and professionally manufactured soccer goals are involved in these incidents.



## Member Claims involving Soccer Goals

Under the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act (CGIA) an unsecured soccer goal could be considered a dangerous condition of a recreation area and any the prior “notice” of the soccer goal tipping, falling or being unsecured increases the Member’s liability exposure.

In one incident in 2013, four students were injured during soccer practice when a soccer goal blew over due to strong winds. It was a homemade goal and was not staked down at the time of injuries. The principal stated that the goals had been locked together for storage but someone cut the lock. CSDSIP made a recommendation to have the soccer goals removed from the premises entirely because the school had taken them out of service.

At another District, a track athlete was stretching on the field when a soccer goal tipped over due to a gust of wind, severely injuring the athlete who sustained a fractured vertebra. Statements from two district employees indicated that the goal was not anchored at the time of the incident and that it was usually not anchored. CSDSIP paid \$87,000 to settle the claim.

## CSDSIP Coverage

In the event of a claim or lawsuit because of an injury involving a soccer goal, CSDSIP’s School Entity Liability (SEL) Coverage would be provided with defense and indemnification of the insured, including our Member for any claims arising out of the Member’s negligence.

Coverage is subject to policy terms, limits, deductibles, and exclusions. All claims are reviewed on case-by-case basis. As always, feel free to reach out to CSDSIP’s Risk Programs Team with specific coverage questions.

It is recommended that Members report any injuries to CSDSIP for investigation as they occur. Upon investigation, CSDSIP will make appropriate recommendations to the Member to best protect them.

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CSDSIP urges Members to adhere to Risk Management recommendations for soccer goals by either properly securing them according to the manufacturers' specifications or removing them altogether if they cannot be properly secured. Doing so will limit potential injuries to students, as well as liability exposures to the Member and CSDSIP.

### Soccer Goal Guidelines

Don't let one of your students or community members become a statistic. Follow the manufacturer's and US Consumer Products Safety Commission's guidelines for movable soccer goals.

The [guideline from CPSC](#) outlines installation, use and storage of full size or nearly full-size movable soccer goals.

#### Suggested Distribution for this Article:

- Facilities/Grounds Personnel
- Athletic Directors
- Soccer Coaches
- Physical Education Teachers

CSDSIP also recommends including this information in Facility Use Agreements with all organized soccer associations using school fields. Please require compliance with the guidelines as a condition of use and obtain a ***Certificate of Insurance***.

Please contact the Risk Control Department with any questions or concerns 303.722.2600.