

6/15/12

Research Results (Playgrounds)

New Boston - The last playground I purchased (I have 3) was a CPS212-3 playground, landscape timbers, ADA ramp, etc. from Detailed Play Systems Pro for \$10,997.00 plus shipping of \$1,350.00 totaling \$12,347.00. Installation was done by Safe Play in Tyler. Full installation cost \$5,700. Happy with everything.

Maintenance hasn't been bad. About three months after it was installed, one of the children wrote graffiti on it. I investigated and found the little brat. Brought her cleaners, brushes, etc and told her it had to be off by tomorrow afternoon or else (whatever else meant). It was gone and we haven't had any more graffiti on it. That was in July 2008.

Paris - Paris was forced to provide playgrounds because of the Young litigation several years ago. It has been a constant headache maintaining 4 playgrounds. Although you rarely see any children playing on them they need constant upkeep and repair mainly because of damage not wear and tear. This week we are replacing the required mulch (fire retardant). at a cost of just over \$2,000.00. One person tried to sue us (unsuccessfully) over an accident her 5 year old child supposedly had on the playground and they were not even residents. The cost and effort required is not worth the benefit gained by the children.

Brenham - Have not purchased any recently. Removed most of what we had due to maintenance and safety issues.

Bellville used NVB playground equipment 317-826-2777 in Indianapolis, IN. I am very pleased with the equipment. It was installed in 2009 and still looks new; of course the kids play on it. The cost for us was about \$52,000. We got the works.

Abilene - Purchased June 2009 from Playwell Group and Playworks for approximately \$63,368. It costs \$5000.00 every 4 or 5 years to maintain broken pieces.

Dublin - Yes, Gametime \$50,868.59 At this time it has not cost us anything to keep up except maintenance time to rake the ground cover to fill in holes. We will have to add some ground cover maybe next year. The playground was installed November of 2009. The playground causes a lot of dissention among the kids and kids too large playing on the equipment designed for up to 12 years. Teenagers hanging out too late at night. The playground is located in the center of the area behind 20 apartments.

Teague - Just purchased new playground equipment from American Parks Company in Prosper, TX. Spent \$25,000 in capital fund. It hasn't been installed yet. Our old equipment was more than thirty years old and we had to

remove a non-functioning merry-go-round earlier this year because it cost us on inspection.

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Van Horn – Not recently, but I did buy a cover for the equipment for 9,800.00, bought some 3 benches, 2 trash receptacles and a handicapped table for 4,240.00

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Overton – have some older playground equipment in place in two locations. We are in the process of reviewing prices and types of equipment available to add to and/or upgrade the equipment we have. We haven't spent any money on upkeep of the old equipment. Pro's---we have quite a few young children and we are pretty far from the City Park. Cons--liability concerns, costs of equipment and upkeep.

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San Marcos – Have you purchased playground equipment?
Yes, at a site that does not otherwise have a nearby park/playground area.
From:

American Parks Company
117 West Broadway
Post Office Box 489
Prosper, Texas 75078
1-800-381-4491
1-972-347-6441 fax
info@AmericanParksCompany.com

\$39,491 for two playground areas, each with three pieces of playground equipment and rubber mulch. We also spent about \$18,000 for a basketball court with adjustable hoop height and special surfacing. We used different contractors for the slab and the backboard/surfacing.

Everything is under warranty but we have peripheral costs such as signage and security cameras. Initial costs are approximately \$6,000 – \$7,000.

Pros and Cons of having the playground equipment?

Pros: Well-maintained playground/recreational areas show that we are committed to quality housing services. It also provides areas that help keep kids from playing in the streets.

Cons: Grafitti and other vandalism occur from time to time and some residents don't like having play areas near their units.

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Port Isabel – We bought playground equipment in 2009 from Game Time. The price was 28,972.03. This is the first time with a playground and its been working out ok. The maintenance keeps up with it once a week. It is still in good condition. We are going to purchase another one for another site. At first kids were fighting for the swings, slide, etc. but now it seems to be much calmer.
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Kenedy and Karnes City

Kenedy purchased theirs in 2000. Kids love the play ground equipment. Once we put in seating and shade for the parents there are actually families out at the playground. Every three to four years (I think we just put in the 3rd load) we do have to replace the play ground fill. It runs around 2,000 to 2,600 depending on the cost of delivery. We spent around 20,000 initially on the play equipment. Twelve years later we are going to have to replace one slide to the tune of around \$2,800.

Karnes City was purchased around 2002, I am not sure what the initial purchase price was. We have had to replace fill in Karnes City one time and it cost around 1,200. We did just put in a toddler set of equipment, total price installed is close to 14,000. Next we will work on seating and shade. I think when you have the equipment and a place that mothers can gather and visit you have a play ground that is well used.

Both sets were purchased from GameTime.

Pros of equipment

Kids are more apt to play on equipment than a/c units and climb on buildings
Families group together at the playground creating more of a family atmosphere
Makes property look very nice – it is bright
Residents seem to take pride in the play area and keep it a bit cleaner

Cons of equipment

Kids will be kids, broken arms, bumps and bruises (have never had a parent upset over their children's actions though)
Older kids use the tunnel slides or any area of the equipment that affords privacy for "alone" time – have had the police bust a few older teenage couples in various stages of undress

Over all it has been a great investment.

Seagraves – Will NEVER have playground equipment as long as I am Executive Director-----entirely too much liability.

Childress – Yes GAMETIME matching grant approx. 60,000.00 in 2005. Yes I would do it again BUT YOU HAVE TO HAVE MAINTENANCE STAFF THAT WILL KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON IT. DO TO VANDALISM. Because it will happen.

Frisco – They purchased playground equipment a few years before I was here– maybe 2005 or 2006. Seldom used. Often trashed and a place for graffiti. Also the shredded surface they used is spread all over the property.

Edgewood – All East Texas housing authorities were required to install playgrounds during the Young litigation. We were given funds to do it, so we

were happy to oblige. Don't remember the specific costs but it was expensive. However, meeting the requirements of "fall zones," "fill materials," and fencing cost about as much as the equipment. The playground companies will design the area for you and designate how much fall zone and fill material is required. We first tried wood chips but they only lasted about 3 years and then we had to replace, so we went with the shredded tires the next time. Have been very satisfied with these, although they get very hot in the summer. So does the equipment though.

The kids use the playgrounds quite a bit so we are glad to have them. Have not had to do much maintenance so far, just inspect regularly for loose bolts, broken pieces, etc. Have had a little trouble with graffiti being painted or written on the plastic but we just spray paint over it.

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Bastrop – We have not. We have a Boys & Girls Club on property that had a playscape donated. Upkeep became an issue, especially with REAC inspections. Ultimately, they opted to remove it rather than maintain it.

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Deport – 10–15 yrs. ago did purchase (from one of the many catalogues that come in the mail) and provide area for playground – it proved to be nothing but a headache. Children of all ages need to be supervised. Small Authorities do not have the funds nor personnel. The equipment purchased was destroyed by community vandals. Our community is too small for police force. Truly a sad situation when parents continually turn their children over to someone else to be supervised and you dare not correct. In my tenure there will be no more such effort.

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Aransas Pass – Yes we have purchased playground equipment in the amount of slightly over \$4,000. The only problem we have had is keeping the big kids off of the "spring mounted" toy rides designed for the little ones. I had to close the playground for a while to make a point.

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Texarkana – we went with Hunter Knepshield
on our new sites and have been very happy with what we got. This has all been within the last two years. It did cost a pretty penny – nearly \$80,000.