



Community Ice Rink Volunteer Manual



Valentino Park Ice Rink, 2021

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Welcome & Purpose

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is proud to support community-led outdoor ice rinks. These natural rinks offer:

- Free skating for all ages.
- Healthy outdoor activity that promotes wellness.
- Opportunities for families and friends to connect.
- A boost to community spirit through recreation and play.

This manual outlines everything volunteers need to know—from setup and safety to maintenance and reporting.

Getting Started

Community groups interested in operating an outdoor rink must apply through the Parks and Recreation Department. Each group should include at least **three volunteers** to support rink construction, maintenance, and inspections. All volunteers must complete and sign the Ice Rink Volunteer Application.

Before the rink opens, all volunteers will receive training on safety procedures, maintenance standards, and Township expectations.

Rink Request Process

To operate a community rink:

- Form a core team of at least three volunteers.
- Submit a request to the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Each volunteer must complete the Ice Rink Volunteer Application Form (see page 10).

Township Support

The Parks and Recreation Department provides:

- Access to municipal water supply.
- Weekly safety inspections and rink status signage (open/closed).
- Training to all volunteers.
- Start-up meeting and site visit with Team Leaders.
- Basic equipment:
 - Hoses and nozzles

- Shovels
- Two picnic tables
- Public signage
- Pond hockey nets will be supplied by the Township at the request of the team leader
- Additional requests should be submitted to the Township and will be reviewed on a case by case basis

Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities

Ice Rink Team Duties

- Construct and maintain the rink throughout the season.
- Monitor ice conditions and post rink status daily.
- Complete the Outdoor Ice Rink Inspection Log daily when rink is open.
- Assign a Team Leader to coordinate efforts and communicate with Township staff.

Team Leader Responsibilities

- Ensure all volunteers attend orientation.
- Oversee daily inspections and log submissions.
- Communicate with Township staff regarding rink status, issues, or emergencies.
- Coordinate flooding schedules and snow clearing.

Safety Guidelines

Volunteers must prioritize the safety of themselves, fellow team members, and the public. This includes:

Personal Safety

- It is strongly recommended volunteers work in pairs—never alone.
- Always carry a cell phone for emergencies.
- Wear:
 - Weather-appropriate clothing
 - Footwear with good traction
 - Insulated rubber gloves for flooding
 - Dry gloves for snow clearing

Public Safety

- Identify risks, take the necessary corrective actions and document both.
- Any potential hazard (within the park) that cannot be corrected immediately should be reported as soon as possible to the Parks and Recreation Department, including after-hours.
- Ask rink users to stay off the ice during maintenance.
- Post clear signage when rink is closed or under maintenance.

Prohibited Conduct

- Consumption or use of alcohol, cannabis or illegal substances is prohibited at all times.
- No use of commercial-grade tools or equipment.

Ice Creation Guidelines

Rink Layout & Equipment

- Township staff will approve rink size and location.
- Ideal layout includes separate areas for hockey and public skating.
- If only one rink is possible, a schedule must be created and posted.
- Hockey nets are to be placed so that the public is not skating or sitting behind either net.
- Additional supplies to build the rink must be approved by the Manager of Parks and Facilities.

Laying the First Sheet of Ice

Conditions:

- Temperature consistently below -5°C.
- Frozen ground.
- 5–6 inches of packed snow, snow should be leveled.

Steps:

1. Spray lightly with fine nozzle—apply water in thin layers—avoid pooling.
2. Allow each layer to freeze before adding more.
3. Repeat until a solid sheet forms.
4. Avoid walking on ice until firm.
5. Continue flooding until ice is at least 1" thick.

Tips:

- Flood late at night when coldest
- Avoid flooding below -23°C (may crack ice)
- Conserve water: flood only when below -5°C

Opening & Closing the Rink

Opening

- Notify Township staff when rink is ready.
- Rink must be inspected and approved by Township staff before opening.
- All volunteers must complete orientation before rink opens.

Closing

- Rink may be closed due to unsafe conditions.
 - If closed by Township staff during weekly inspection, the team leader will be notified, and staff will identify the areas that need to be fixed before reopening.
- Township staff must inspect the rink before it reopens.
- At season's end, or during a prolonged mild spell:
 - Drain all water
 - Remove snowbanks and boards to allow runoff
 - Break up ice to speed melting
 - Coordinate board removal with Township staff

Rink Operations

Lighting

- For rinks that have lighting, timers automatically turn lights on at dusk and off at 10:00 PM.
- Manual override available for flooding after hours.
- Lights may be turned off during warm spells or inactivity.

Maintenance

- Inspect rink daily when posted open.
- Please keep the park and outdoor rink clean by picking up debris.
- Identify and remove hazards quickly to reduce the chance of injury.
- Close the rink if ice is unsafe.
- After heavy use, patch ruts and holes.

- Maintain level ice thickness across the surface - level ice regularly, especially corners and low spots.
- Understand proper flooding techniques and hose care.
- Disconnect and drain hose after each use, lay hose in a flat coil – not in an upright position.
- Document all maintenance in the online inspection log.

Snow Removal

- For major snowfalls, contact Parks & Rec at parks@get.on.ca for snow removal, we will respond at our earliest opportunity. The clearing of snow at community ice rinks may be delayed and have to wait a few days based on township-wide snowfall, operational demands and availability.
- Minor snow clearing and scraping is the responsibility of the volunteer team.
- Motorized tractors, vehicles or all-terrain vehicles with a plow are not permitted as snow removal items.
- If a rink team wishes to use additional snow removal items to those

Risk Management & Incident Reporting

Safety Responsibilities

- Identify and correct hazards.
- If a hazard cannot be fixed immediately, close the rink and report it to Parks and Recreation staff.

Emergency Contacts

- Customer Service (7 AM–2 PM): 519-856-9596 ext. 113#
- After Hours (2 PM–7 AM): 519-856-9596 ext. 150#
- Email: parks@get.on.ca

Incident Reporting

- Report all accidents, injuries, or vandalism
- Provide:
 - Your name and contact info
 - Park name and location
 - Description of the issue

Rink Use & Respect Policy

RZONE Policy

Rinks are maintained at various parks throughout the Township and are accessible to all those who wish to participate during posted hours. All rink users must follow the Township's Respect and Responsibility Policy.

Access may be restricted for:

- Harassment or abusive behavior
- Vandalism or destruction of property
- Unsafe conduct

View the full policy: RZONE Policy <https://www.get.on.ca/respect-and-responsibility---the--rzone--policy->

Damage & Vandalism

- Report immediately to Parks and Recreation staff.
- Provide temporary fixes if safe to do so.
- Repeated vandalism may require alternate solutions.

Forms & Logs

Daily Inspection Log

- Must be completed online when rink is posted open.
- Link provided to Team Leader.

Volunteer Application Form

Includes:

- Personal contact info.
- Agreement to Township policies.
- Liability waiver.
- Parent/guardian signature if under 18.



ICE RINK VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Personal Information

Date:		Rink Location:	
Last Name:	First Name:	Initial:	
Home Address:		Apt/Unit:	
City/Town:		Postal Code:	
Home Telephone #:	Email Address:		
	Work Telephone #:		
Best times(s) to reach you:			

I understand and agree that:
• The volunteer services will be rendered without payment for same. • A volunteer position is conditional upon adherence to the Townships policies, guidelines and procedures, as well as the laws of Ontario/Canada. • A volunteer is covered under the Township's liability insurance. • A volunteer is not covered under the Township's health benefits program. • A volunteer is not eligible for Workers Safety Insurance.

I, _____ acknowledge that I am over/under the age of 18 and will provide services to The Township of Guelph/Eramosa on a volunteer basis.

VOLUNTEER WAIVER

I agree to release and discharge The Township of Guelph/Eramosa from and against all claims and proceedings, in respect of any damages or injury sustained by myself arising by reason of my provision of these services and acknowledge that I have read the Township's Policy on Outdoor Ice Rinks and the Outdoor Ice Rink Manual.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

To be signed by parent/guardian if volunteer is under the age of 18.