

# Mount McCurdy

## Safety Guidelines for Use of Sled Hill

Sledding is one of the great childhood memories of winter time. It is a fun winter activity for the whole family that does not involve much skill. Sleds are inexpensive, sledding hills are free, and getting your children outdoors promotes physical activity and a love for nature.

The City of Corunna is happy to offer the Mount McCurdy sled hill in Hugh McCurdy Park to our patrons. Providing safe winter activities for the public is one of the responsibilities of municipal management. The City of Corunna continually strives to reduce risks to our patrons and insists that all participants and spectators follow a few simple safety guidelines. The chance to go sledding is one of the best things about winter. But as with most winter sports, sled riding requires proper equipment and safety precautions.

**The City of Corunna does not supervise use of the hill – use at your own risk.**

Please remember "safety first" when choosing to participate in any recreational activities. Sledding is a hazardous activity and presents risk of injury. Thousands of people are treated every year for sledding injuries. You are solely responsible for determining if you or your child is physically fit and/or adequately skilled for sledding/tubing/snowboarding activities, and for determining if conditions are safe for sledding. Most sledding injuries happen to children 14 years of age and younger.

Inclement weather can cause icy and/or dangerous surface conditions. On densely packed snow, sleds travel faster, so be prepared for a quick ride if the snow isn't fresh. In unpacked snow, sleds with runners may have a tendency to sink, so check out the area before you begin to avoid disappointment. Please be considerate, wait your turn and refrain from horseplay.

**The following tips will help keep you out of harm's way and out on the slopes having fun.**

**Sled Hill Patrons:** To have the safest possible time while enjoying the winter weather, only sled down the designated face on the north side of the hill. Never sled toward fences, trees & shrubs or other patrons. The building of ramps, bumps, moguls, hills, or jumps out of snow, dirt, wood, metal, or any other substance is prohibited in all parks. Never stand or pile on more people than the sled was designed to hold. When at the end of your run, move quickly off to the side to avoid collisions with others coming down the hill. Always walk up the hill well off the sledding path. If a collision is going to happen, roll sideways off the sled/tube/snowboard and protect your head with your hands and arms. Please sled only during daylight hours. Sled down the hill sitting up or kneeling. Never slide down head first or standing.

**Parents & Patrons:** Adult supervision is critical, especially for younger children. Parents should always remain with young children. Some sledding safety precautions can be taken before you even leave the house. The number one sledding safety rule is; "always wear a helmet" to help prevent injuries. Your helmet should fit properly and securely. Even a bike helmet will provide extra protection against accidents. The safest position for riding a sled is feet first. Most sledding injuries involve the head or face, so sledding feet-first is recommended. Hypothermia and frostbite are always hazards in especially cold weather, so wear clothing that's temperature appropriate. Sweaters, coats, thick socks, winter boots, gloves or mittens, and a warm hat are all winter essentials.

**Sled Hill Design:** Although there are no known standards or guidelines that apply specifically to the design of public sled hills, the city has worked hard to reduce certain risks associated with sledding.

Starting at the top of Mount McCurdy, a flat staging area allows sledders to get situated and ready before starting down the slope. Borrowing from playground guidelines for slides, a 30-degree average slope was constructed on the face (sledding area) of the hill.

The face was constructed with a dish design to help channel sledders toward the bottom and away from obstacles. The run-out, which is the flat area at the bottom of the face, extends far enough to allow sleds to come to a safe, unobstructed stop. The face was constructed in a northern orientation to minimize direct sunlight which causes melting snow and resulting bare spots and ice patches when it refreezes.

Walkways are provided, separated from the face, to allow sledders to return to the top without being struck by descending sledders.

**Sled Selection:** Sledding is primarily a children's pastime, which is why, when buying sleds for your family, age recommendations and weight capacity are just as important as sled types and materials. Sleds have a wide range of levels of control, so be sure that you check out the control level on your sled before you head outdoors. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.

Selecting a sled that's appropriate for your children's age and size will help ensure they have a safe and exciting sledding season. Studies have shown that sledding injuries most often strike 10 to 14-year-old boys and 5 to 9-year old girls, so take extra care that children in these age groups are using safe and appropriate sleds. Use sledding equipment that the rider can steer and stop.

Sleds without a steering mechanism are the most dangerous since the rider has no way of avoiding objects in his or her path. Avoid use of any sledding equipment that is difficult to control. Sleds should always be checked beforehand to ensure there are no jagged edges, cracks, splinters or protruding parts. Also ensure the sled is sturdy and has secure handholds.

**Safety Reminders:** Before sledding down the hill, make sure your path is clear of obstacles and other people right down to the bottom of the hill. On the way down, keep your arms and legs tucked in.

If multiple people are riding a sled, remember that increased weight can mean increased speed, so don't underestimate the distance a sled can travel. The more weight on a sled, the faster it's going to travel once it picks up speed, so inform your children that piling on a sled is unsafe.

Never ride into a snow bank – there could be hidden dangers. Roll off a sled that won't stop!

A responsible adult should actively supervise children less than 12 years of age, and should ride on the sled with children less than 5 years of age. Children should wear a neck warmer instead of a scarf, and they should never wear clothing with drawstrings as they may get caught under the sled.

Know your limits. Rest if you are tired. Go inside if you are cold. Keep your clothes dry.

Icy or hazardous conditions, as well as reckless use or other endangerments, may result in either the temporary or permanent closure of the hill.