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New Yorkers for Parks Releases New Report on Outdoor Recreation Features at Neighborhood Parks

July 30, 2008—New York, NY, New Yorkers for Parks released “Spotlight on Recreation: A Report Card on Parks Project” which rates the maintenance conditions of playgrounds, courts, and ball fields in New York City parks once a month from June to August.

“Many New Yorkers use ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts and playgrounds to experience the outdoors and to exercise. With this report, park users will know which recreational features are well maintained such as playgrounds and those that need extra help like athletic fields and courts,” said Christian DiPalermo, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Parks.

This is the second time in three years that New Yorkers for Parks has tracked the conditions of athletic fields over the course of a summer, though in different parks. Again, too many fields had significant amounts of broken glass. A new challenge this year was that a number of athletic fields were locked to the public without any explanation.

Across all three recreational outlets, litter is a significant problem though there was much improvement in graffiti removal. The courts we surveyed had many cracks in the surfacing that could lead to injuries and 16% of tennis courts did not have nets. The playgrounds were well maintained, but could use improvement in safety surfacing, which declined over the summer.

In addition to the ratings, this new report also offers recommendations to improve the use of these vital outdoor recreation features. The Parks Department should prohibit glass on athletic fields similar to what is currently done for beaches; implement a maintenance strategy for timely repairs for court surfaces and replacement of torn and missing nets; and ensure that dedicated playground staff continues to be available to address maintenance needs.

New Yorkers for Parks is the only independent watchdog for all the city’s parks, beaches and playgrounds. For 100 years, New Yorkers for Parks has worked to ensure greener, safer, cleaner parks for all New Yorkers.

To download a copy of the report and executive summary, please log on to www.ny4p.org.

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