

Sandpiper Beach Wheelchair (Children's Chair) – Safety Procedures

Overview

The **Sandpiper** beach wheelchair is designed specifically for **children** to use on the beach (on hard or soft sand), in low water, and on grass or surfaced footpaths.

The **Sandpiper** beach wheelchair is to **ONLY** be used on the beach it was hired from (either Williamstown or Altona Beach).

The chair is not designed to be submerged in water, however is able to go in low water. Water depth should not exceed the centre of the rear wheel. The wheelchair is not to be used in deep water and **ONLY** between the flags as patrolled by the Life Saving Club.



NOTE there is a hoist available for transfer at Altona Beach within the Weaver Reserve accessible changing facility. Please ensure you bring your own sling.

There is **NO** hoist available at Williamstown Beach.

The **Sandpiper** is not an independent chair therefore please ensure you have the right level of support to transfer and push the beach wheelchair.

It is important to be prepared before you head out in the beach wheelchair. Please read this document in full including signing the safety procedures checklist (attached) prior to using the wheelchair.

If you have any questions about using the beach wheelchair please contact **Council's Metro Access and Inclusion Office** Monday to Friday call 9932 1000 or email socialplanning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Before use

- check the weather for incoming tides as well as the strength of the waves, wind strength, storms and heat prior to hiring the wheelchair. The staff at the **Life Saving Club** will be able to provide you with helpful information about weather conditions and suitability for the beach wheelchair
- ensure walkway / routes to be taken are clear of hazards

- visually inspect seating, tyres and moving parts for possible damage
- ensure the foot rest is lowered and the parking break is activated prior to a person being seated
- if possible, get another person to hold the handles of the wheelchair so that it will not move when a person is being seated. If this is not possible then stand behind the chair and hold the handles yourself
- if you are not experienced at lifting, it may be useful to approach a local rehabilitation center, hospital or physiotherapist regarding training for transferring and lifting
- please ensure you have the right level of support to transfer and push the beach wheelchair

During use

- the wheelchair has been designed to be used on dry sand and wet sand at the water's edge
- the wheelchair is stable in low water levels up to the centre of the rear wheels, in still water conditions
- the wheelchair is **NOT** to be used in deep water
- do not exceed maximum recommended loading of 80kg
- do not leave a person unattended when in the wheelchair
- when parking find a level surface and ensure the parking brake is securely locked down
- gradients steeper than a standard ramp rise are not recommended unless two people are assisting with pushing the chair
- in dry soft sand it is often easier to pull the chair backwards rather than to push it forwards. Two people are recommended to pull the chair backwards through the sand or up a slope
- ensure heavy items are not placed on back of wheelchair or the handles
- always keep the passenger informed about what you are intending to do (turning, entering water, crossing road)
- the wheelchair must not be propelled by towing behind a motor vehicle, kite or other means, other than being pushed by an assistant

- the wheelchair is not designed for self-propelling (independent use) and must be supervised and pushed by a responsible assistant
- the chair has balloon tyres which do have a tendency to float, depending on weight being carried, however will become unstable once the chair and the passenger become buoyant. Given this the water depth should not exceed the centre of the rear wheel. At all times in the water an assistant must be present to push the wheelchair and to ensure its stability in the water
- when in low water, the use of the safety belt is recommended, depending on the passengers understanding of their capacity to move around freely. If a passenger experiences unsteadiness (such as with epilepsy), the seat belt should be used
- always use the safety belt when using the chair on dry land, including soft and hard sand. If a passenger experiences unsteadiness (such as epilepsy), the seat belt should be used at all times
- the wheelchair is not to be removed from the designated Altona and Williamstown beach area

After use

- ensure seat and foot rests are in the correct position and wheel brakes applied prior to a person exiting the wheelchair
- where possible the hirer should use a shower or hose to clean down the chair before returning to the **Life Saving Club**
- any safety, mechanical or accessibility concerns with the use of the Beach wheelchair should be reported immediately to the **Life Saving Club**

We welcome your feedback on your experience and use. Please provide feedback directly to the staff at the **Life Saving Club** or contact Council's **Metro Access and Inclusion Officer** on 9932 1000 or email socialplanning@hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au.

For further details about Accessible and Inclusive beaches visit www.hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au for information and resources available.

For more information about the Sandpiper visit: www.beachwheelsaustralia.com

Safety Procedure checklist for user to complete *prior to* use of the Sandpiper wheelchair

Have you

- read and understood the wheelchair safety procedures
- been provided with a demonstration on how to use the wheelchair
- checked park brake release and park brake engage
- checked how to adjust arm and foot rest
- checked back rest adjustment, seat belt harness
- noted the low water instructions
- checked weather conditions such as wind strength, incoming tides, possible storms, heat
- checked the life saving flags are in operation
- provided an approximate time to return the beach wheelchair
- note **Life Saving Club** contact number in case of unexpected issues or emergency: **Williamstown 0478 416 004, Altona 9398 1270**

Name of hirer

SignatureDate / /

Name of **Life Saving Club** representative.....

SignatureDate / /