

Twin Brooks Outdoor Rink - What's All Involved in Ice Making & Maintenance?



Twin Brooks Community League is proud to offer its residents wonderful facilities for their family enjoyment including a full size NHL outdoor skating rink. The Community League volunteers are preparing to start the winter rink operations. Maintaining the rink in the winter mostly involves ice maintenance, and ensuring the surrounding walkway areas around the rink are safe for public use.

The quality of the ice is dependent on the frequency of weekly maintenance performed. All maintenance for the rink is provided by resident and neighbouring community volunteers.

Once the ice is established, maintenance to keep the rink in excellent skating condition requires 3 to 4 nights per week of scraping and flooding (3-4 hrs/session) or weekend mornings for those early risers. In past years, this task has been completed by teams where 1 or 2 volunteers may sweep rink (power sweeper), and then another volunteer or two can come later and flood the surface, thereby breaking up the commitment time.



The Community League is well equipped with snow blower, power sweeper, power reel to retract hoses and other tools, so the task is not as strenuous as it may sound, but is made easier with more hands helping.

Getting the initial ice ready at the beginning of the season, takes up to 30 hours. The team of volunteers usually coordinate to flood 6 nights in a row (weather permitting) and involves prepping the surface- (snow removal if needed) & as many thin layered floods per night as possible to eventually build the ice thickness up to 1.5 to 2 inches (4 to 6cm). This task is much easier with more people on shifts of 2 hours or so. That way the team can keep the flooding going all evening as one end of the rink freezes while you flood other areas. With enough volunteers, each individual may only have to come by 1 or 2 nights of that week. That operation usually starts in late November or first week of December.



We have experienced ice maker volunteers in our community (since 2012) and they are more than willing to show new volunteers the art of rink maintenance and the science of ice making. No previous experience needed.

On a daily basis, after skating is done for the evening, the entire ice surface should be shoveled/power swept. Skates create snow and the snow needs to be thrown over the boards. Pushing it to the side of the boards just degrades the ice surface and creates more work. This task takes about 1 hour and is a perfect task for someone wanting some exercise (besides shovelling the driveway).



Several opportunities for volunteering exist. Snow removal after snow fall can be accomplished any time of day with use of a snow blower and power sweeper but is necessary before rink can be re-opened. If your schedule permits, once trained, daytime rink maintenance is always possible also. **The goal for the volunteer rink maintenance crew is to provide the community with quality skating surface for winter enjoyment of the outdoors.**

Ice making & maintenance is a time consuming operation made easier with **many volunteers**. Weather plays an important role in the success of our rink & Mother Nature always seems uncooperative. Daily dustings of snow render the ice unusable until cleared. Those are annoying....

Both the rink and community center are solely run by volunteers. So residents please be patient when making requests. Several times in past years, the rink has been closed due to overworked volunteers and not enough new help. Rink maintenance can be quite enjoyable. Kind of like taking a walk in winter wonderland, except you are walking behind a snow blower, or a water hose. Lots of comradery at the rink as our volunteers are a great bunch of people. We have several Parent/Teenager teams helping as well. Teenagers are a good proportion of the users of the rink, so it is great when they come out to help maintain it.

The Twin Brooks Community League is looking for volunteers to help with ice maintenance. It is not fair to expect a few volunteers to provide outdoor rink skating for the large community we live in. When we do not get enough help, unfortunately our ice rink will be locked for periods of time, which is a shame to see on nice winter sunny days.

If you are interested in volunteering (no experience is necessary) please contact our Facilities Director at facilities@twinbrooks.ca

Thanks in advance from the Twin Brooks Community League

