## PROCUREMENT AND PRODUCTION

Natures Choice Playground Surfacing (NCPS) is manufactured from recently harvested and debarked North American wood, free of soils, leaves, twigs and other contaminates which hasten decomposition. It is designed to reduce injuries on playgrounds, and provide a stable, resilient surface for trails. Fresh wood is utilized that cannot be made into lumber. It consists of randomly sized wood fibers the majority of which do not exceed 1.5" in length containing 10% to 20% fines to aid in compaction (it is generally understood that the manufacturing process allows a few over-sized pieces). NCPS contains no pallets (which could contain spilled chemicals, paint, metal, or wood preservatives). NCPS is sized with a wood grinder and stored on a concrete pad to ensure clean, contaminant free surfacing.

## INSTALLATION

There are a few common methods for getting the site ready to install safety surfacing in your playgrounds use zone. A barrier cloth is to be placed on top of the existing surface to provide separation. Borders are then used to contain the loose fill safety surfacing. It is possible to use Nature's Cover playground surface under the structure tapering it down to nothing. This is the least expensive because it involves no excavation or borders. However it is only appropriate for certain situations. Another method is "below grade". This requires excavation of the area, to remove the existing sod and soil and make room for the safety surfacing. It is necessary to provide for drainage (usually drainage stone). Barrier cloth is used below the drainage stone and above to provide separation. The use of borders buried at the edge provides a clean straight edge.

Important tips when considering loose-fill materials:

Loose-fill materials will compress at least 25% over time due to use and weathering. This must be considered when planning the playground. For example, if the playground will require 12 inches of wood chips, then the initial fill level should be 15 inches. Standing water with surfacing material reduces effectiveness and leads to material compaction and decomposition. Critical height may be reduced during winter in areas where the ground freezes. Shallower depths are too easily displaced and compacted.

Our product must be installed at 12" in accordance with ASTM F-1292 specifications and it must meet the critical height guidelines set forth by the CPSC for use of wood products for protective surfacing.

## MAINTENANCE

In order to stay in compliance with ADA, woodchips are to remain level across the playground. Raking the playground weekly is needed to keep the playground level. Wear mats under heavy traffic areas can reduce the need to rake the engineered wood fiber. Check weekly to ensure that the woodchip depth is sufficient for the critical fall height of your structure. Due to compaction over time, fresh woodchips should be added every 2 years. Filter fabric is installed to assist in slowing down the breakdown of the woodchips. Wood chips will need to be maintained for quality. This can be facilitated by marking ideal surfacing depths on equipment posts. Displaced loose-fill surfacing should be raked back into proper place so that a constant depth is maintained throughout the playground. If puddles are noticed regularly, consider addressing larger drainage issues. Using a rake or other leveling device, remove all hills and valleys from the surface.