

Vandalism and Fire

Our equipment is designed to be very robust and the diameter of the timbers used is significant - 150mm to 210mm. These timbers have a very dense composition which makes them much less susceptible to damage. If you feel vandalism may be a problem try to limit the use of enclosed spaces within the designs chosen that might be vulnerable or might allow for any potential fires to take hold. A significant amount of ignition fuel would be required even to begin to ignite the timbers, and even then charring of the timbers is more likely, and single timbers are easy and less costly to replace. Try to include equipment designed to be used by older children, which is more exciting and challenging than more traditional play equipment and is less likely to be susceptible to vandalism.

Structural protection against fire

Richter play equipment is much harder to set fire to than might be imagined, the sheer thickness of the wood that we use makes it very difficult to set fire to and equipment that is constructed primarily with high vertical poles such as the Cableway are especially difficult to set alight. We also use a very high percentage of Mountain Larch in our equipment. These trees grow very slowly in the Alps and the timber is very dense. This makes the wood naturally highly resistant to rot and also difficult to set fire to or vandalise in other ways. Where fires are started, they typically burn out very quickly after causing minimal damage that can be repaired easily.

Behavioural protection against fire

Starting fires like most forms of vandalism is a play activity in itself, albeit an anti-social one. It is usually caused by older children who are bored with the play activities that are on offer in the playground. It is therefore essential that equipment is provided to stimulate these older children. The Giant Revolving Disk, the Climbing Wall and the Tractor Tyre Swing in particular are aimed at older children and have an excellent track record of surviving in tough areas and reducing vandalism.

The Evidence

Richter equipment has been successfully installed in a number of "difficult" parks in deprived inner city areas. Examples include: Belfast, Glasgow, Bootle, Newcastle, Leicester and London plus many more throughout Europe.