



# **Net Pegging Anchoring System Being Explored by ORFA Members**

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## Introduction

The ORFA is currently monitoring members who are undertaking the use of new net pegging systems. Further, contact from one hockey league on industry standards or best practices has been received as they prepare to discuss net peg changes at their upcoming annual general meeting. This contact has prompted the Association to provide the following member update on net pegging roles and responsibilities. It is important to note that the ORFA does not recommend or promote any product or service available in the marketplace. Our role is to provide guidance on emerging issues or challenges that impact our industry. The ORFA has formed no opinion on any new net anchoring systems. The information is provided as a supplement resource to the [ORFA Suggested Guidelines for Ice Arena Goal Nets and Goal Frame Anchoring Systems](#)

Currently, there are no legal responsibilities to be met for pegging ice sporting nets. This includes, but not limited to, hockey, ringette or broomball. An unanchored net has little resistance and thus reduces the potential for player injury when sliding into the net.

Net peg anchoring systems has little to do with facility operations and more of a convenience to user groups to ensure consistency of uninterrupted play. Traditionally, it has been assumed that the rink will supply net anchoring and that they will also install the systems after each resurfacing. As facilities continue to struggle with rising operational costs this should be considered a higher level of operational service when setting rental rates.

There is no set obligation to the rink owner to supply net pegs – this provision is a facilities owner’s responsibility to determine if net anchoring will be provided and if so, what design and installation methods are to be used.

If a net peg anchoring system is to be used, they must be selected to meet all levels of play allowing for an ease of breakaway during contact to ensure all levels of player safety. Should the facility wish to offer pegs and/or net pegging services, rink management must develop policies and procedures to guide facility staff on how net anchoring systems are to be allocated, inspected and installed.

It should be considered acceptable to build into rental contracts that users may select, purchase and install whatever net peg anchoring system they believe would be best for their sport, age group and level of play. The governing league should also take full responsibility for inspection, installation and removal from site once play has concluded. The facility should not offer to store or secure these devices on site without a contractual relationship being generated to remove any liability for such a service.



Any costs related to changes to the infrastructure that requires refrigerant line location, drilling, patching or other installation requirements does not have to immediately be borne by the facility. Requests for upgrades need to include who will be responsible for these costs.

Facilities that have used a net pegging system successfully for many seasons who are considering

new anchoring systems must be prepared to carefully investigate such change.

If approached to install a new pegging system the facility should ask the following questions:

- Has the system been designed and approved by an engineer?
- Has the system been formally tested?
- What have the test results shown?

The facility should consider the benefits of executing a contract with the supplier to transfer the risk through a Hold Harmless/Indemnification Clause and require a Commercial General Liability to finance this transfer of risk.

The facility should advise the leagues about this “test” prior to installation and ask for their express permission to install for their next game.

If a facility manager is contacted by a league to upgrade to a new anchoring system it should be submitted in writing to confirm the request was made.

## Conclusion

The question as to “why so many points are raised on any new product or service being offered in our industry” is reasonable. In the early days of ice rink operations products and services were openly offered and tried by rink staff to determine feasibility and suitable application. Equipment, products or services that worked are still in place today. However, risk management and potential for litigation are real challenges facing rink owners and staff. This demands more rigorous consideration before moving forward with any change. Facilities can no longer undertake the role of product testing as this carries too much legal responsibility. Today’s facility leaders must make decisions based on sound science, engineering and risk reduction principles.



The ORFA invites feedback by members on their experiences on this topic. Feel free to share information at [info@orfa.com](mailto:info@orfa.com)