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Ready to make a splash: Hillside Park water playground to debut June 12

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GREENFIELD — Children won't have to wait much longer to cool off on a hot day, because the town will open its splash pad in Hillside Park on June 12.

"We're training on how to use the splash pad this week," said Christy Moore, the town's recreation director. "Then, we'll be ready for the kids."

Moore said the Recreation Department will hold a grand opening on June 12 from 4 to 6 p.m., which will coincide with its Hillside Park Block Party.

"We'll have music, games, a bounce house, food and more," said Moore. "We want everyone to come and celebrate our park and our new splash pad."

Moore said the new 20-by-70-foot splash pad will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. She said it will run on a timer, so it will not work at other times of the day.

"The water won't run constantly," said Moore. "It has hand and foot activators, so the water will spray when someone hits one of them."

Moore said water won't pool on the pad, so there won't be a lifeguard on duty at any time, but rules will be posted and small children should be accompanied by an adult.

She said the town plans to place a portable toilet in Hillside Park this year, because it anticipates the park will be busier than it has been in the past due to the newest feature.

The town received a \$200,000 grant from the state's Our Common Backyard Grant program for the project in May 2014. Town Council then approved \$50,000, which was what the town needed to match the grant.

The state program encourages towns and cities to build new playgrounds and spray parks.

Moore said the system will use fresh water in the park, which will drain into the sewer system and go to the wastewater treatment plant. She said the pad includes ground and overhead sprays.

She said the town expects to know after this year how much water the pad will use each year.

Mountain View Landscapes and Lawncare of Chicopee installed the splash pad, which includes a brushed concrete floor so that children don't slip while getting soaked.

The splash pad is located next to the park's playground. Hillside Park sits on 4.97 acres and borders Conway, Elm, West and Grove streets.

Last year, Hillside Park neighbors complained about illegal activities going on in the recently renovated park, including drug deals and destruction of park benches and tables, but according to the town, those complaints have diminished as more people are using the park.

Neighbors have rallied town government and neighborhood support to take back the park by encouraging more community use, community policing and a neighborhood watch.

Moore said the splash pad is one more way to encourage people to use the park.



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