

Beach Wheelchair and Beach Walker Safety Guide and User Manual

Supported by



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OVERVIEW

The **Beach Wheelchair and Beach Walker Safety Guide and User Manual** contains important information about the Hippocampe All-Terrain Beach Wheelchair and Beach Walker.

The beach wheelchair and walker are available for free loan on a 24/7 basis at Middleton Beach and Emu Point, Albany.

The Hippocampe All-Terrain Wheelchair and Walker are designed to be used on sand, rough terrain and in the water.

A transfer mat is available to assist with transfers to and from the beach wheelchair.

A transfer hoist is not currently available.

The maximum user weight for the Hippocampe Beach Wheelchair is 130kg and should not be exceeded.

The recommended maximum user height is 185cm (6ft).

The maximum weight for the walker is 120kgs.

WHEELCHAIR FEATURES

- Interchangeable neutral buoyancy and floating wheels
- Adjustable headrest
- Adjustable armrests
- Adjustable harness
- Wheelchair weight: 20kg



WALKER FEATURES

- Adjustable handle height between 86-95cm
- Wide polyurethane wheels
- Seat height: 55cm
- Carry basket: 5kg limit
- Walker weight: 11kg



LOCATION



ACROD parking bays.



Beach wheelchair & beach walker are stored here in a timber storage area at the back of the surfclub.



Accessible toilets.



Path access to storage area and toilets.



Path access to beach via the ramp.

OPERATOR INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of the user and their support person(s) to ensure the wheelchair and/or walker are used safely, that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent accidents, and that the equipment is cleaned after use for the next user.

Those who use the wheelchair and/or walker do so at their own risk. The City of Albany cannot be held liable for any incident that may occur while the wheelchair and/or walker are being operated by a third party.

It is the responsibility of the user and/or support person(s) to ensure they have read and understood the **Beach Wheelchair and Beach Walker Safety Guide and User Manual** before use.

Please contact the City of Albany if you have any concerns about the safety of the wheelchair or walker on (08) 6820 3000 or commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au.

It is the responsibility of user and support person(s) to use the transfer mat in a safe manner.

The City of Albany cannot provide detailed advice on transferring users of the beach wheelchair or walker.

SAFETY GUIDE

- Take care when using the beach wheelchair and beach walker on uneven surfaces.
- Do not use the wheelchair or walker as flotation devices.
- Wheelchair and walker brakes are designed to assist with transfers only. Do not rely on the brakes to prevent the wheelchair or walker from rolling down a steep path.
- It is the responsibility of those using the wheelchair and/or walker to cease use if either appears faulty or may impact safe use.
- Ensure the user is seated as far back in the seat as possible when using the wheelchair or walker with a seat.
- Ensure the user's back is against the backrest when seated in the wheelchair or walker.
- The wheelchair and/or walker should only be used when there are enough support persons available to safely assist the user with transfers to and from the equipment.
- The wheelchair or walker transfer mat should only be used when there are enough support persons available to assist the user and perform the transfer safely.

PRIOR TO USE

- Check the weather conditions. Ensure you are aware of wave patterns, rips, currents, and wind strength.
- Due to the 24/7 availability of the wheelchair and walker, water safety provided by Surf Life Saving volunteers may not be available at the time of your booking. It is therefore the responsibility of the user and/or support person(s) to take reasonable safety precautions to avoid injury when using the wheelchair or walker on land and in the water.
- Ensure you have adequate support to assist with the use of the wheelchair and/or walker. It is not the responsibility of the security guard to assist members of the public with operating the equipment.
- The Hippocampe Beach Wheelchair and Walker are designed to provide a high level of comfort and support. However, please seek advice from a health professional before use if you are unsure whether the equipment meets your requirements.
- Check that the wheels are correctly locked into place before use (see page 7).
- Read '**Using the Beach Wheelchair and Using the Beach Walker**' guide before use.

AFTER USE

- Ensure you meet the security guard back at the shed at your agreed return time.
- Use the brush provided to remove sand from the wheelchair and/or walker, and ensure the equipment is left clean and ready for the next user.
- Ensure all items are returned to the shed in the condition they were found.
- Please report any maintenance issues and/or damage to the City of Albany by emailing commdevel@albany.wa.gov.au or calling (08) 6820 3000.

FLOATATION DEVICES

Flotation vests are available and may be worn for added safety near or in the water.

If the user chooses to exit the wheelchair to bathe in the water, a life jacket **MUST** be worn.



USING THE BEACH WHEELCHAIR

WHEEL OPTIONS

Balloon Wheels (white wheels)

- Designed for easy movement across soft sand.
- Stable in water up to the centre of the tyres.
- The wheelchair may float if submerged in water deeper than the centre of the tyres.



Neutral Buoyancy Wheels (black wheels):

- The wheelchair does **NOT** float when submerged in water.
- Provides greater stability in the water compared to balloon wheels.
- The wheelchair remains stable in water up to seat height.



HOW TO CHANGE THE WHEELS

You can switch between balloon wheels and neutral buoyancy wheels. Here's how:

Removing the Wheels

1. Lay the wheelchair on its side on a flat surface.
2. Find the small silver button underneath the seat, near the wheel attachment bar.



**Wheel
attachment bar**

3. Press the button and gently pull the wheel out.



4. Turn the wheelchair over and repeat to remove the other wheel.
5. Place the removed wheels safely inside the shed.

Attaching the new wheels

1. Lay the wheelchair on its side again.
2. Line up the silver button on the new wheel with the hole on the attachment bar.
3. Press and hold the silver button, then slide the wheel into the attachment bar.



Attachment hole

Silver button

4. Push the wheel in firmly until it clicks into place.



Tip: For balloon wheels, hold the inner part of the wheel under your arm for better control while attaching (picture above).

Tip: If the button doesn't click in, gently twist the wheel bar until it lines up with the hole.

HOW TO ADJUST THE HEADREST

1. Use the black screws to adjust the position of the head rest.
2. Ensure you tighten the screws once the headrest has been adjusted.



Adjust headrest angle

Moves headrest forward and back

Adjusts headrest height

HOW TO USE THE BRAKES

Important: The brakes are for assisting with transfers only. They will not stop the wheelchair from rolling down a steep hill.

Using the Brakes

1. Pull the brake handle out from underneath the seat.
2. Line the brake up with the wheel.



3. Pull the handle down and then up to lock it in place

Releasing the Brakes

1. Pull the brake handle down to unlock it.
2. Push the handle back under the seat to return it to its original position.

HOW TO ADJUST THE ARMRESTS

To Lift the Armrest

1. Unclip the armrest buckle.
2. Lift the armrest up. – This may make it easier to transfer the user into the beach wheelchair.

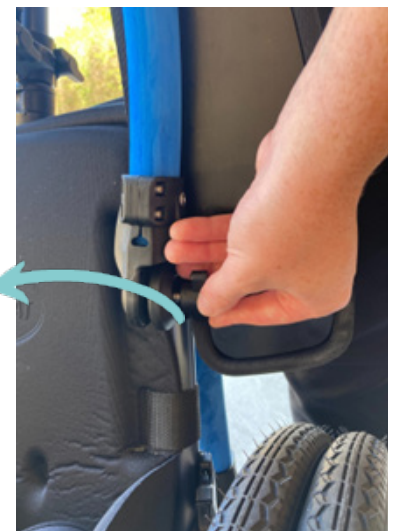
To Remove the Armrest Completely (Easier for self-propelled users).

1. Unscrew the top bolt on the armrest.
2. Remove the screw and fastening bolt.
3. Place all loose parts in the storage box inside the shed.



Armrest Buckle

Armrest Screw



HOW TO ADJUST THE HARNESS

Before Transferring the User

1. Unclip one buckle that connects the harness to the wheelchair seat.
2. Lift the black clip attached to the push bar to release the upper harness straps.

After Transferring the User

1. Clip the lower part of the harness together. Pull the straps to adjust the fit and make sure it's snug.
2. Attach the top part of the harness by open the clip and feeding the strap through it. Pull the strap until the harness feels secure then push the clip down to lock the strap in place.

Tip: Make sure all straps are secure but comfortable for the user.



MANEUVERING THE WHEELCHAIR

Lift the front wheel off the ground to turn left or right.

Tip: When maneuvering the wheelchair across soft sand, turn the wheelchair around and pull the wheelchair with the backwheels leading.



USING THE PULL ROPE

1. Use the pull rope located underneath the wheelchair seat to move the wheelchair in and out of the water.
2. When finished, roll the rope around the blue handle to store it neatly.
3. Place the rope under the seat, in the gap between the seat and the black straps..



ENTERING THE WATER

- If entering the water, the use of a floatation device is suggested.
- When using balloon wheels, do not go deeper than the middle of the wheels to keep the wheelchair stable.
- When using neutral buoyancy wheels, do not go deeper than the seat height to maintain stability.

TRANSFERRING TO THE BEACH WHEELCHAIR

- A transfer mat is available inside the shed to help with the transfer process.
- It is the responsibility of the user and/or support person(s) to make sure the transfer is done safely.
- Please make sure you have enough support people to assist with the transfer.

Before Transferring the User:

- Check that the wheels are attached correctly.
- Use the brakes to reduce movement during the transfer.
- Lift or move the armrests, if needed, to make transferring easier.

USING THE BEACH WALKER

ADJUSTING THE HANDLE HEIGHT

To ensure comfort and safety, adjust the handle height before use:

- Unscrew the positional bolt located on the frame.
- Raise or lower the handle to the desired height (ideally at wrist level when standing upright).
- Reinsert and tighten the bolt securely.



HOW TO USE THE BRAKES

To slow down or stop the walker, squeeze the brake handles towards you.

Always engage the brakes when the walker is stationary or during transfers.



Note: The brakes are not designed to hold the walker on steep slopes.

USING THE BACKREST

The walker includes a support bar that acts as a backrest when seated.

- Push the support bar forward until it locks in place to provide upright back support.
- Before sitting, ensure the backrest is properly positioned and the brakes are engaged.



SITTING POSITION

When seated on the walker:

- Ensure the user is sitting as far back in the seat as possible.
- The user's back should rest against the support bar
- The brakes must be fully engaged before sitting or standing.



UNDER SEAT STORAGE

The walker includes a mesh storage basket located under the seat.

Maximum capacity is 5kg. Do not overload the storage area.



HOW TO ADJUST THE WHEEL ALIGNMENT

If the wheels become misaligned during use:

1. Place one foot gently on one of the back wheels.
2. Lift the front of the walker slightly by the handles. The wheels will self-align into the correct position.

