July 11, 2020

Some of you, or perhaps many of you, might be wondering why the Ice Center of Cupertino has not reopened yet while the Solar 4 America rink (and some others) has. The answer is that the guidance from the State of California has not changed, and it specifically says that ice rinks may not open.

Here is a note from the State of California Department of Public Health dated 6/8/2020 regarding guidance in the easing of some restrictions:

**NOTE: This guidance is not intended for ice rinks, roller rinks, laser tag arenas, etc., where guests are less able to maintain physical distancing of at least six feet, where a central part of the activity is circulating in the space, and which can accommodate a large number of guests who are mainly from different households.**

When the rink in San Jose opened, we contacted the Santa Clara County Health Department for an explanation. They would not put anything in writing, and their only explanation was that the rink was not open to the public but only to private groups. Please note the California Guidance does not parse the meaning of the word “open”; paying members of the public are skating in the ice rink means, at least to us, that the rink is open. Plus, private groups are still not allowed to gather indoors anyway.

So, then we asked for an explanation from the State of California Department of Public Health, as to why Santa Clara County was allowing ice rinks to open. Below is a copy of the reply we received:

**From:** Essential Services Inquiries <EssentialServicesInquiries@cdph.ca.gov>
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2020 3:01 PM
**To:** Michael Benesh
**Subject:** New CDPH.CA.GOV web inquiry submitted for: Coronavirus/COVID-19

Thank you for your inquiry below.

 Skating rinks are not currently permitted to operate. This applies statewide.  A reopening guidance pertaining to that industry will be issued in the future. See <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-family-entertainment.pdf>.  We cannot speculate as to the exact dates as it is depends on counties meeting certain public health metrics.

Please continue to monitor the Governor's site as all available information as to the stages can be found: [https://covid19.ca.gov/roadmap/#guidance](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__covid19.ca.gov_roadmap_-23guidance&d=DwMFAg&c=Lr0a7ed3egkbwePCNW4ROg&r=u1kUg3C2fO0Yu8g9Qbo7PRutXapsSDQ-s7q27_zK_ehWtlfEoNVwpfZT1k-Qwhc7&m=K1UG9sFRCbaNiQnNxfRMQ53PC4Mn_vQD_RThqWB8UPw&s=3Wtl9uKrjFYb3DWWFOeOKs-qBl1auEP9LfhsdLVzoZ4&e=)

 Regards,

Essential Services Inquiries

California Department of Public Health

You may have read an article in the Mercury News dated July 4 (updated July 6) regarding Santa Clara County not being approved for a variance from the State of California for certain easing of restrictions.

The bottom line is that the State of California has said, repeatedly, that it is not safe to reopen ice rinks at this time. While counties may take it upon themselves to institute more restrictive Covid-19 rules, they may not institute less restrictive rules than the state mandates.

With the most recent surge in Covid-19 positive cases, hospitalizations and ICU admissions, it is simply not safe to reopen indoor facilities for gatherings of any type. It is not safe for our customers and not safe for our staff. Here are the latest stats on Covid-19 in Santa Clara County:

Covid-19 Hospitalizations are up 80.3% in the past 14 days.

Covid-19 ICU admissions are up 66.7% in the past 14 days.

The number of ICU beds available throughout the county as of July 6 is down to 37%.

Yes, we would very much like to reopen the Ice Center of Cupertino. Our customers want to skate, our staff wants to work, and like businesses everywhere, we very much need the revenue that opening would bring in. But, while all of that is important, even very important, it does not override the fact that opening the rink would needlessly risk Covid-19 exposure to everyone that entered the building, and by extension, everyone those people came in contact with.

The ice remains in place, all of the mechanicals are being maintained, and we have stockpiled a large quantity of Covid-19 approved sanitizing items, including electrostatic guns, tens of thousands of wipes, gallons and gallons of hand sanitizer, etc. When it is allowed, and safe, we will reopen the Ice Center of Cupertino and operate under the rules in place at the time. We have contingency plans in place for limited operations, depending on the specifics of the restrictions at the time of reopening.

Please stay safe and we very much look forward to you returning when appropriate to reopen.

Michael Benesh

Ice Center Enterprises

Ice Center of Cupertino