

September 18, 2018

Use of Signs


Signs are a fantastic way to communicate and make the public aware of hazards in our parks, facilitate use of our facilities, and make our roadways safer. By increasing awareness and safety, a Municipality can meet their legal responsibilities and reduce liability exposures.

Anyone with responsibility over parks or trails would want to warn users of any dangers on the property. Signs are often the best method of advising warning to the public. When it comes to posting signs advising of hazards, it is best to keep the message clear and simple. Pictorial signs can sometimes convey a warning better than written signs. Especially when not everyone speaks the same language. In addition, signal words such as “Warning” or “Caution” will draw people’s attention. You want to make sure the message stands out so that it is observed. The purpose of the sign is safety.

When we provide facilities to the public, there are expectations of those who use the facilities’ amenities. However, the public may not be informed of those expectations or mindful of other users. A sign listing rules of use is a great way to get those expectations across. It is always recommended that the sign contain only three to four rules, as many people do not bother to read longer lists. Deciding what rules are most important to the facility operator before you place a sign is of utmost importance. You also want to make sure you place signs where people will become aware of and read them. Placing the rules behind a door that is seldom closed does little good. Signs should be placed in areas where most people access. Signs can easily convey a facility operator’s intentions to users.

Roadways are constantly in flux due to weather, events, construction, or accidents. Signs are necessary to advise the public of changing hazards. Identifying hazards such as “Road Washed Out Ahead” or “Lane Closures”, and promptly replacing signs knocked down due to an accident, are very important when it comes to managing our roadways. Signs should be regularly inspected to ensure that they are in place, clearly visible, and meet Provincial Standards. Not having all available information can put drivers at risk and proper signs will keep them informed.

Signs are our best option for communicating information, advising of expectations, and increasing safety in our communities. Taking the time to ensure that signs are clear, visible, and in the proper place will benefit everyone. No one wants to hear about a loss that could have been prevented due to a simple sign.



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