

Municipal Signs (Non-MUTCD)

Communicating Hazards & Regulations

DO I NEED WARNING SIGNS?

Public Access Areas

Governmental Immunity is granted on a case by case basis but an entity usually qualifies if it can make a reasonable effort to keep its facilities in “reasonable” condition, repairs items when notified, warns of unforeseen hazards, or have posted facility use rules & regulations

Parks, Open Space, Trails

Post facility use rules & regulations + any unforeseen hazards. Recreation Immunity varies by state; explore the posting requirements, and exclusions.

Negligence Components

Keep in mind - the prosecution will try to prove:

1. there is a Duty to provide a safe location or oversight, and
2. There was a Breach of that Duty, and
3. Real Damages.

TYPES OF SIGNS

- Information
- Regulatory
- Hazard (Danger/Warning/Caution/Notice)

WHAT SHOULD THE SIGNS COMMUNICATE?

Informational signs provide direction/information related to your facility. The color and shape of

these signs can be creative and aesthetic in design.

Regulatory signs should quote local and state health/safety codes, i.e., beach or park rules such as No Fishing or No Pets Allowed. The usual colors for regulatory signs are black and white, see local rules.

Hazard signs are designed to make visitors aware of the hazards so they can make appropriate personal decisions (defensive action or in-action).

- Color/Size – reference State statutes and ANSI Z535.4 for suggested word/color combinations
- Use stand-alone signs not included within informational signs (the intent gets diluted).
- Posting locations should be where they will attract attention, unimpeded sight lines, at about eye level, or just below.
- Sign wording should be clear & concise, stating the hazard, and what you want the visitor to do.
- Choose a Trigger Word that reflects the hazard type, ie, Danger, Warning, Caution, or Notice. See ANSI Z535.4 Definitions of Trigger Words below
- State the hazard concisely
- State your desired visitor action

TRIGGER WORDS AND HAZARD STATEMENTS

Trigger Words and Hazard Statement Combinations Will Depend on Hazards Present:



Electrocution Potential

Stay Out!

WARNING

Drowning Potential
No Swimming!

CAUTION

Slip/Trip/Fall
Natural Conditions Watch Your Step

HAZARD CLASSIFICATION SIGNAL WORDS

ANSI Z535.4 Definitions

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Danger:

DANGER

Indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, will result in death or serious injury. The signal word “DANGER” is to be limited to the most extreme situations. DANGER signs should not be used for property damage hazards unless personal injury risk appropriate to these levels is also involved.

Warning:

WARNING

Indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury. WARNING signs should not be used for property

damage hazards unless personal injury risk appropriate to this level is also involved.

Caution:

CAUTION

Indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in minor or moderate injury. CAUTION signs without a safety alert symbol may be used to alert against unsafe practices that can result in property damage only.

Notice:

NOTICE

This signal word is preferred to address practices not related to personal injury. The safety alert symbol shall not be used with this signal word. As an alternative to “NOTICE” the word “CAUTION” without the safety alert symbol may be used to indicate a message not related to personal injury.

INDUSTRY RESOURCES

ANSI Z535.4 & Z535.5

<http://webstore.ansi.org/default.aspx>

CONTACT US

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