



Warning Signage for Accessible Ponds & Lakes

A pond or lake is defined as a body of water that is more than 12 inches deep and at least 10 feet across at its widest points. A pond or lake is accessible when it does not have a continuous surrounding barrier within 50 feet of its shoreline (that is higher than four feet with no openings wider than 2 feet). Although accessible ponds and lakes can be attractive spots for activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming, they present a variety of hazards. To minimize the hazards associated with ponds and lakes, well-maintained warning signage should be posted.

Placement

Place warning signs on all sides of the pond and at any openings leading to the pond. Since sign placement will vary according to the pond's layout and terrain, it may be acceptable to separate warning signs up to 100-500 feet from each other, as long as each opening to the lake or pond has a visible warning sign.

Warning signs may be posted either in the pond or on the shore.

Ensure that warning signs are visible from the shore of the pond and that there are no obstructions (e.g. trees, bushes) blocking any part of them.

For ponds located on golf courses, warning signs may be posted at the main entrance to the golf course instead of at each pond therein.

Construction

Warning signs, including their graphics, must be made of a weather-resistant material such as metal, pressure-treated wood, plastic, or other approved material.

Warning signs may use universal symbols for prohibited activities.

Warning signs must be securely fastened to the ground.

Suggested warning messages:

-) WARNING
-) No swimming or boating
-) Pond or Lake not monitored for hazardous conditions



Size

Warning signs must be at least 12 inches high and 18 inches wide

Lettering on warning signs must be at least 1.5 inches high with any graphics visible by a person with normal vision from 50 feet away.

Maintenance

Warning signs must be regularly maintained to ensure that they are still visible and in good condition. The person who owns or controls land that includes an accessible pond or lake is responsible for this maintenance.

This fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice

For additional information on this topic please contact ACWA JPIA Risk Control Department, Terry Lofing, Administrative Assistant (tlofing@acwajpia.com) or 800-231-5742