



Improving Safety at Ohio State Park Beaches

December 24, 2012

Project Summary

A thorough review of signage at Ohio State Park beaches was conducted in order to assess the relative effectiveness of message delivery, especially as these messages relate to swimmer safety. Surveys of park management staff as well as park visitors were conducted in order to gauge the efficacy of current signage. Standardized photographs were collected to document the current state of signage. A SWOT analysis was used to examine the current state and to make recommendations to park management for improvements.

This report includes recommendations in the following areas:

- Standardizing key safety messages
- Effective placement of signage
- Standardizing format and fonts for improved recognition
- Improvements to first-person delivery of safety messages

Project Purpose and Goal

In many cases the most common causes for drowning, injuries and complaints at Ohio State Park beaches are, to some extent, already being addressed with current signage. The intended result of this project is to improve message delivery and public understanding of these messages by making specific, fact-based recommendations to park management on the four areas outlined above.

Project Methodology

The project team spent three months gathering information via surveys and photo exhibits in order to gain a true understanding of current beach safety-message delivery, and the visitor's comprehension of same. These surveys were conducted in face-to-face visitor interviews, web-based questionnaires and through social media. Photographic exhibits were gathered from park managers by requesting three types of photos be taken at each state park beach: Close-up of rules, rules in context to the beach, and over-all beach setting. This information was reviewed using a SWOT analysis and recommendations were made for improvements based on the data.

Project Team

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