



Real-Time Risk



TIMELY NEWS AND TIPS TO HELP REDUCE RISK

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Guidance for Reopening Outdoor Recreation Areas

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As you prepare to reopen your parks and outdoor recreational areas, you may have questions about how to do it more safely. At CIS, we wanted to share our best practices guidance — as well as some advice from both the Oregon Health Authority and National Recreation and Parks Association. There are also park-related exposures you should be aware of.

Below is a Q&A. If you have additional questions, please contact us! We're here to help!

Q: We're getting a lot of public requests to open the parks and playgrounds which contradicts the governor's current orders. Will CIS cover claims if we do reopen parks?

A: CIS will not cover any claims that are a result of a member violating the governor's executive orders.

As we navigate the re-opening process with our outdoor parks and open spaces, CIS strives to keep you up to date with the information you need to safely move forward.

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Q: What kind of signage should we put up in parks when we do open?

A: You should tell the public what they can expect such as:

1. Restrooms are CLOSED
2. Playground equipment is CLOSED
3. Maintain social distancing
4. Leave one EMPTY space between parked cars

You should announce this information on web sites or social media sites where members of the public get information about your parks. We also recommend putting up signs at park entrances and where the particular facilities are closed or affected (e.g., parking lots, restroom doors).

Q: If we do reopen the restrooms in the park, how often should we clean them?

A: According to the OHA, you should thoroughly clean restroom facilities at least twice daily and, to the extent possible, ensure there are adequate sanitary supplies (soap, toilet paper, hand sanitizer) throughout the day. Restroom facilities that cannot be cleaned twice daily should be kept closed. If you choose to open restrooms and are unable to clean them twice daily, a sign must be posted stating that.

Q: How can we promote social distancing in a park?

A: Keep any common areas such as picnic tables in open spaces arranged so there is at least six feet of physical distance between parties (chairs, benches, tables). Post clear signs to reinforce physical distancing requirements between visitors of different parties.

Keep day-use areas that are prone to attracting crowds closed, including but not limited to playgrounds, picnic shelters/structures, water parks and pools, sports courts for contact sports like basketball. Also, keep overnight use areas closed.

Q: Some of my Parks and Rec employees are reluctant to open parks and clean restrooms. How do I address this?

A: Ask them what they need to feel more confident about doing their jobs in these uncertain times.

1. Provide appropriate PPE for tasks being performed.
2. Consider providing coveralls for field employees that can be kept and washed at work.
3. Consider providing orange vests for employees with a message reminding public to "Maintain Social Distancing — Keep 6 Feet Away."
4. Retrain your employees on "Bloodborne Pathogens and Universal Precautions."

Additional Information

This list is NOT all-inclusive. Additional resources are available and can be found here:

- OHA Specific Guidance for Outdoor Recreation Organizations - sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le2342E.pdf
- National Recreation and Park Association - www.nrpa.org

Phase Two Guidance

The following phase two guidance has been shared by the Oregon Health Authority.

- [Indoor and Outdoor Entertainment Facilities](#)
- [Swimming Pools, Spas and Sports Courts](#)
- [Recreational Sports](#)
- [Zoos, Museums and Outdoor Gardens](#)

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Important ADA Considerations to Prevent Lawsuits

On the liability-claims front, a recent lawsuit was brought against one of our members that could affect your local government, too.

The new legal issue that's tripping up government agencies around the country is inaccurately stating that their parks, facilities, equipment, or campgrounds are ADA compliant when they may not be. This can take the form of a park sign or your website.

Prior to posting any language about your ability to provide ADA accommodations, please discuss your ADA-compliance with your:

- City Attorney/County Counsel
- Agent
- CIS legal team
- CIS Senior Risk Management Consultant
- Legal Counsel specializing in ADA

Additionally, if you have a request for ADA accommodation or compliance, be sure that you've researched whether you can provide these accommodations, and if not, provide the individual or group with an explanation why not.

We've created an excellent resource guide, [ADA Compliance in Public Parks and Recreation](#), to help with navigating ADA regulations and requirements in open spaces.

Spending More Time Outdoors? Watch Out for Poison Oak!

In the area of workers' comp, each year we receive claims related to poison ivy, oak, and sumac. It's very easy to forget about these plants until we've been exposed and then suffer from an awful rash. Please remind your teams about the pesky plants as they work in your parks, on trails or in recreational areas. They should also be careful when cleaning up yards or doing outdoor sports activities.

We've provided a great [Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac Resource aid](#). Please share it with your crew!

Working Together During Uncertain Times

We hope this phased re-opening process is successful. And we're committed to provide you — our cities, counties, park employees and community members — with the best information and support that will help keep you safe and healthy during these difficult times.

