

# INFORMATION SHEET

## DAM SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DAM OWNERS

### ***SIGNAGE MANDATE***

As specified in the [British Columbia Dam Safety Regulation](#), as of November 30, 2011, all owners of dams located partially or entirely on Crown Land and that have a classification of significant, high, very high or extreme must post signs at those dams in the manner described in the Regulation. The signage mandate has been reiterated in the 2016 Dam Safety Regulation (hyperlink) under Section 11 and this Information Sheet has been updated accordingly. Under the 2016 regulation, owners of dams that are on land that is surrounded by or adjacent to Crown Land are also subject to the signage mandate. The requirement for signage on dams is a commitment that meets one of the twelve recommendations put forward by David Morhart, Deputy Solicitor General in his report entitled [Review of the Testalinden Dam Failure](#) (July 2010). Recommendation #3 states: *The Ministry of Environment (now the Ministry of Forest, Lands & Natural Resource Operations) should consider implementing signage to make it clear to passersby that the structure is a dam and to provide direction and emergency contact information, including contact information for the owner, to report any issues observed.*

### ***GENERAL SIGNAGE CRITERIA AND INFORMATION FOR DAM OWNERS***

#### 1. Considerations for Signs

- Background colour and reflectivity can affect the visibility of safety signs. Low light conditions may reduce visibility and make existing signs ineffective.
- Use of a reflective background material can increase visibility.
- Signs usually consist of dark lettering on light backgrounds or vice versa to ensure legibility.
- Keeping signage consistent increases recognition by the public.
- Where possible, sign placement should consider sun and glare, shadows, orientation and visitor safety.
- As a general rule, place signs on the right hand side (when facing the dam crest) of the approach to the dam.
- Sign placement should not interfere with the normal operation of the dam.
- Sign placement should not be too close to trees or foliage that could cover the face of the sign.

#### 2. Materials and Cost

Dam owners are responsible for the cost, installation and maintenance of signs on their dams. Costs vary greatly with quantity, size, location and type of material used. Posts should be constructed of metal or other durable material. Commonly used materials for signs are:

- Marine quality, ¾ inch plywood,
- Medium density Fiberboard (MDF), and
- Aluminum.

The post kits (post, sleeves, bolts and anchor) required will depend on the situation and sign material chosen. For installation at provincial dams, the posts chosen were 3.6 metres long and 57 mm in diameter. The anchor was 1050 mm long and 64 mm in diameter. Each post kit weighed about 23 kilograms. Installation costs vary depending on the location of the dam, type of installation required and whether installed by the dam owner or contractor.

### 3. Maintenance

Inspection and maintenance procedures for the signs must be included by the dam owner in the dam's Operation, Maintenance and Surveillance manual. Standard maintenance plans should address physical damage, visibility, legibility and appearance. Key concepts of a maintenance plan should include:

- Frequent inspections to ensure that signs are maintained and repaired as needed – include sign check as part of the surveillance and formal inspection of the dam and include procedures into the dam's Operation, Maintenance & Surveillance manual.
- Taking precautions to reduce vandalism to the signs,
- Repairing or replacing damaged signs quickly,
- Checking the reflectivity of signs that are meant to be seen at night, and
- Updating protocols for employees and/or visitors to report damage.

Experience suggests that annual maintenance of signs averages about 30% of the initial cost as signs are common targets for graffiti and gun shots.

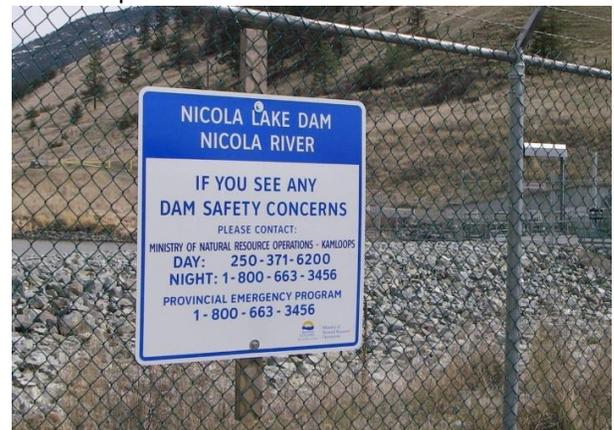
### 4. Specifications for Signs

Signs must conform to the specifications provided in the Dam Safety Regulation. This includes but is not limited to:

- Signs must be at least 75 centimetres high and 60 centimetres wide.
- Lettering on the sign must be clearly visible under all seasonal conditions from 15 meters.
- The sign must contain the following information and be in the following format:



For Example:



### **MORE INFORMATION**

Information on dam safety is available on the BC Government Dam Safety Website:

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public\\_safety/dam\\_safety/index.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/public_safety/dam_safety/index.html)

Or, can be obtained from your local Dam Safety Officer or by contacting:

Dam Safety Section  
Water Management Branch  
PO Box 9340 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9M1