Stormwater Pond Warning Sign Requirements

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY • MARYLAND

Working together for a cleaner, greener economically vibrant community

Watershed Management Division
Stormwater Facility Maintenance

2016

Stormwater Pond Warning Sign Requirements

Contents

Purpose

The Montgomery County Code, Chapter 19, Article II, Section 19-28(d)(2), <u>Inspection and Maintenance of Stormwater Management Systems</u>, requires the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MC DEP) inspect fences or other pond safety devices. When a deficiency is discovered, MC DEP must require property owners to correct the deficiency.

The Montgomery County Code, Chapter 36, <u>Pond Safety</u> states that any publicly accessible pond must have warning signs posted on all sides of a pond and at any major approach to the pond, such as a path; **if not surrounded by a continuous, permanent fence or barrier within 100 feet of the shoreline.**

Subject to Change Disclaimer

The requirements, specifications, regulations, and procedures in this document are subject to change without prior notice, if necessary, to keep MC DEP policies in compliance with Local, State and Federal laws.

Definitions

For purposes of pond safety, the following definitions shall apply to this document.

Dry Pond:	A pond that does not permanently retain water.
Fence:	A four foot (4') high barrier with no opening of more than two inches (2") in width and four inches (4") in height at any point.
MC DEP:	Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection
MC DOT:	Montgomery County Department of Transportation
MC DPS:	Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services
M-NCPPC:	Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission.
MSHA:	Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration
Publicly Accessible Pond:	A water impoundment that: A. Retains a permanent pool more than 24 inches deep and 20 feet across at its widest point, B. Is not a swimming pool as defined in Chapter 51 of the Montgomery County Code, and C. Is not surrounded by a continuous, permanent fence or barrier (at least four feet high with no opening wider than two inches) within 100 feet of the shoreline.
100 Year Flood Plain:	A relatively flat or low land area adjoining a river, stream, pond, stormwater management structure, or watercourse subject to partial or complete inundation by the 100-year flood.

Warning Sign:	A pond safety measure that at minimum, must warn that entering the water to swim, skate, or boat is unsafe and must be maintained in good condition by the person who owns or controls land that includes a publicly accessible pond.
Wet Pond:	A pond that permanently retains water which exceeds a depth of twenty-four inches (24") at any location.
Wetland Pond:	A pond that permanently retains water which does not exceed a depth of twenty-four inches (24") at any location.
WSSC:	Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Sign Requirements

If a wet pond is not surrounded by MC DEP approved fence, warning signs shall be installed in accordance with Chapter 36 of the County Code.

The MC DEP will provide pond warning signs for residential stormwater management ponds. If the pond is located on a commercial, industrial or institutional property, the DEP will specify the wording and graphics for the sign. Generally, a minimum of four (4) signs will be required for a wet pond and shall be erected on the north, south, east and west sides of the pond.

You may email your pond plan to the MC DEP (AskDEP@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov) and MC DEP can determine the number and locations of required fence signs. An MC DEP Inspector can meet the sign installation contractor on site to furnish the signs and verify proper sign placement locations.

Sign Location Requirements

1. Warning signs must be posted on all sides of a publicly accessible pond and at any major approach to the pond, such as a path.
2. Warning signs may be posted in the pond or on the shore and must be visible from the shore and not obscured by vegetation or other obstructions.
3. Signs mounted in the water shall be affixed to a metal post ('U' channel, 2 lbs/LF or 2" square steel tube, 12 gauge).
    a. The post must be driven five feet (5') into the pond bottom and the bottom of the sign must be a minimum of three feet (3') above the normal water surface elevation.
4. Signs installed outside of the water, must be installed on either metal posts ('U' channel, 2 lbs/LF or 2" square steel tube, 12 gauge) or 4"x 4" wooden posts and shall be installed per MSHA Standard Detail 812.01 (Attachment A) except the posts only need to be buried 30" into the ground. The signs must be attached with bolts (3" long lag screws for wood posts).
    a. The bottom of the sign must be six feet (6') above the ground.
5. Warning signs at golf courses may be posted at the main entrance to the golf course rather than at each pond.
6. Signs mounted on a fence shall be fastened to a fence post, either with a bolt through the post or with a lag screw on a wooden post.

Sign Specifications

1. The signs shall be metal, eighteen inches (18") tall and twenty-four inches (24") wide.

Privately fabricated signs do not require MC DEP indication.

2. The lettering on warning signs must be at least 2 inches high, and any graphics must be large enough to be clearly seen. All lettering, graphics, and the surface of the sign must be composed of a weather-resistant material. The sign must provide a legible written message and appropriate graphics.

3. Warning signs must be made of a weather-resistant material such as metal, pressure-treated wood, plastic, or an approved equivalent.

4. The warning sign must, at a minimum, warn that entering the water to swim, skate, or boat is unsafe. The sign may use the international symbols for prohibited activities.

5. Warning signs required under Chapter 36 must be maintained in good condition (all graphics and lettering must remain legible) by the person who owns or controls land that includes a publicly accessible pond.
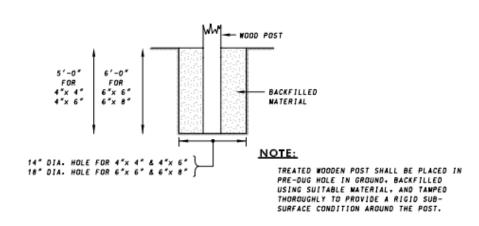
Inspection

In order to comply with the Montgomery County Code and Code of Montgomery County Regulations, the following procedures are required of all stormwater management inspection and enforcement personnel.

When a stormwater management facility maintenance inspection is performed, all required signage and any existing fence surrounding a pond or fence providing protection from a potential hazard (e.g., fence on top of an endwall) shall be visually inspected.
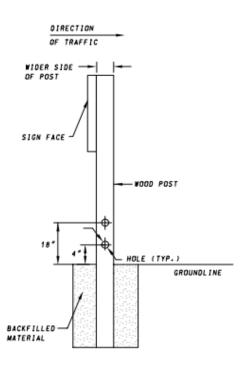
If inspection reveals any of the following deficiencies, the property owner shall be required to correct the deficiency. Sign repairs shall be assigned a HIGH repair criticality. Compliance time for the posting of signs shall be 30 days.

a. Missing or damaged signs.

b. Any other deficiency MC DEP determines that requires correction.

TYPICAL FOUNDATION FOR WOOD SUPPORTS

5'-0" FOR 4"x 4" 4"x 6"

6'-0" FOR 6"x 6" 6"x 8"

14" DIA. HOLE FOR 4"x 4" & 4"x 6"
18" DIA. HOLE FOR 6"x 6" & 6"x 8"

WOOD POST

BACKFILLED MATERIAL

NOTE:
TREATED WOODEN POST SHALL BE PLACED IN PRE-DUG HOLE IN GROUND, BACKFILLED USING SUITABLE MATERIAL, AND TAMPED THOROUGHLY TO PROVIDE A RIGID SUB-SURFACE CONDITION AROUND THE POST.

WOOD POST MODIFICATIONS FOR BREAKAWAY FEATURE

POST SIZE	HOLE DIA. (IN.)
4"x 4"	--
4"x 6"	$1\frac{1}{2}$
6"x 6"	2
6"x 8"	3

NOTES:
1. ALL WOOD POSTS LARGER THAN 4"x 4" SHALL BE MADE BREAKAWAY BY DRILLING TWO HOLES CENTERED AT 4" AND 18" ABOVE THE GROUNDLINE AND PERPENDICULAR TO THE ROADWAY.
2. ALL SUPPORTS WITHIN THE CLEAR ZONE SHALL BE BREAKAWAY UNLESS PROTECTED.

DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC

WIDER SIDE OF POST

SIGN FACE

WOOD POST

18"
4"

HOLE (TYP.)
GROUNDLINE

BACKFILLED MATERIAL

WOOD POST MODIFICATIONS FOR BREAKAWAY FEATURE

SPECIFICATION 812	CATEGORY CODE ITEMS		
APPROVED	DIRECTOR - OFFICE OF TRAFFIC AND SAFETY		
	APPROVAL • SHA REVISIONS	APPROVAL • FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION	
	APPROVAL 10-10-00	APPROVAL 2-1-01	
	REVISED 5-17-07	REVISED 5-2-07	
	REVISED	REVISED	
	REVISED	REVISED	

REFERENCED ON: MD 812.04, MD 813.01

Maryland Department of Transportation
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
STANDARDS FOR HIGHWAYS AND INCIDENTAL STRUCTURES

WOOD SIGN SUPPORT FOUNDATIONS AND BREAKAWAY FEATURES

STANDARD NO.   MD 812.01

ALL Maryland SHA Standards Available:
http://apps.roads.maryland.gov/BusinessWithSHA/bizStdsSpecs/desManualStdPub/publicationsonline/ohd/bookstd/index.asp