

8.0 - Public Safety, Law Enforcement, and Security

Laws and ordinances provide the foundation for controlling activities and behavior within the jurisdiction of the agency. General municipal codes, laws and ordinances and state and federal laws are applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities. However, these laws generally have broad application and lack specificity as they relate to the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. Special laws and ordinances may be enacted to specifically address and guide public use and behavior and may delegate authority to issue and enforce permits, licenses, rules and regulations applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Agency staff are first-in-line to gain compliance with ordinances, rules and regulations. Regardless of whether the agency employs law enforcement officers or contracts for law enforcement services, agency staff have responsibility to educate patrons on the proper use of parks, recreation areas and facilities. However, when patrons fail to comply, enforcement becomes the responsibility of sworn law enforcement officers.

For agencies relying on the services of law enforcement officers from other jurisdictions or departments, it is essential that formalized liaison relationships be established between agency staff and the official law enforcement organization.

Particular attention should be given to national, state and local emergency plans and procedures directed toward large-scale natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, forest fires, and floods. Plans should include evacuation procedures, inventories and locations of equipment and materials, displacement plans for facility residents and activities, and provision of psychological aid for staff affected by emergencies.