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Risk management is
for decision makers.

Volunteers': Asset or Liability
includes all these points and more.

7 Tips For Drafting Volunteer Waivers

It seems as though every public and non-profit entity is eager to enlist volunteers. The benefits of volunteer labour is clear; your organization gets needed help, expands its awareness base in the community and provides services that they could not otherwise afford.

At what point do the problems outweighed benefits? Many organizations use waivers as one way to manage the risks of working with volunteers. If you choose to use waivers as one of your strategies there are many types issues that you will want to refer to in the waiver. Key features are:

1. **Release and Waiver:** Use a bold title; it clearly informs signers the intent of the form they are signing.
2. **Be specific:** Refer to hazards in the types of volunteers' activities.
3. **Medical Treatment:** If you think that you may need call or provide emergency medical services, inform signers that you will call for, or provide first aide, if you consider it necessary.
4. **Assumption of Risk:** Having briefly described the hazards, volunteers' are acknowledging the hazards and confirm their acceptance of those risks.
5. **Insurance:** Decide whether or not you want to mention the presence, or absence, of medical insurance coverage.
6. **Release of Photographs:** When you will use photos of the event for publicity purposes in any media (print, website, etc.) indicate that. Volunteers' can agree or disagree with the use of his/her photo.
7. **Signing Authority:** Adults may sign on their own behalf. When the volunteer is a minor, the waiver must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. (Note that waivers have limited value when it is not signed by adults on their own behalf.)

Remember, waivers cannot guarantee no claims will occur. These tips will help you improve protection from hazardous activities. But a carefully drafted waiver is better than no waiver at all!

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Disaster Recovery: Is Environmental Damage Inevitable?

Following immediate emergency services response to a disaster initiating recovery efforts is critical. In doing so, it may seem unnecessary to ponder the effect of decisions on environmental concerns. Yet in undertaking disaster recovery you may also be laying the groundwork for long-term environmental damage to your eco-system.

For example, disposal of damage property and dead domestic and wild animals can lead to rapid spread of disease. Agricultural areas can lose production capacity through release of chemicals into the environment or by infestations from the escape of foreign species typically kept as pets.

Beyond simply recreate of what was there before, you have an opportunity to do things better. "Build back better" is a recognized strategy in physical infrastructure planning post-disaster that can be applied to environmental restoration. In the face of climatic change and increasing urbanization recovery may allow changes to land use patterns. In the face of such global change, 'restoring' ecosystems services and functionality may be preferable to reinstating previous conditions.

Ecosystem recovery plans require balancing the wants and needs of stakeholders. Often stakeholders have competing wants; elected officials need to balance these often-competing demands. Common tools available to help in the decision-making process include scenario development and strategic environmental impact assessments. In the end the ideal of a 'win-win' result is unlikely. More often the best option will be 'win more-lose less' that will be unpopular with some stakeholders

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