1955

Poster in forest fire prevention

Lloyd Wesley Morrison

The University of Montana

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THE POSTER IN FOREST FIRE PREVENTION

by

LLOYD WESLEY MORRISON

B. S. Montana State University, 1952

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Forestry

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

1955

Approved by:

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

No publications of any sort that deal directly with the use of modern advertising in forest fire prevention were found. Answers to inquiries put to Foote, Cone and Belding; The Advertising Council, Inc.; Outdoor Advertising Association; Lithographers, National Association Inc.; Traffic Audit Bureau, Inc., all replied that no work on this subject has been or is being carried on by any of these agencies.

The referenced and quoted material in this paper was obtained from books, pamphlets and other publications. Information was also obtained from personal interviews and personal correspondence of the author. A list of these sources of information is contained in the bibliography.
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INTRODUCTION

"Prevent Forest Fires"--systematic forest fire control was established on National Forest lands about 40 years ago. At the same time, private timberland owners in several states, realizing that fire observes no property lines, began organizing their own timber protective associations. Through this 40 year period fire control people have been using advertising media in an effort to bring about an awareness to the public of the dangers and damages caused by forest fires.

A major factor in replenishing the wood supply is the fire prevention and control progress made by public and private interests in the past 25 years.

Through advertising the public is constantly being reminded that nine out of ten forest fires are man-caused and preventable. The causes being 90 per cent human, prevention of forest fires is primarily a matter of organization and education of the public.

Advertising touches the life of every person, almost everyday, in some direct manner. It provides information about products, services, and ideas, and influences decisions. Advertising is a part of the economic and social fabric of the nation. The economic and social
welfare of a nation is greatly enhanced when concerted and harmonious effort is exerted to educate citizens to an understanding of what is beneficial and to urge them to act to secure these benefits. Such efforts can reduce the number of traffic accidents, improve public health, and reduce the number of man-caused forest fires.

The problem of keeping the forests from burning presents a complex and difficult task. Advertising is teaching the professional forester, and others who have the problem of planning fire prevention programs and campaigns, how best to present a plan to the masses. Many forest fires are the result of human carelessness, negligence, ignorance, or incendiarism.

Forest fire prevention, therefore, is a problem of improving people's actions, of creating a better understanding of the importance of forests and range lands, developing an awareness of the dangers of fire in the forests, and expanding the sense of personal responsibility on the part of every citizen. The best, and perhaps the most effective way to awaken people to their responsibility of forest fire prevention is through advertising.

The purpose of this paper is to enlighten people on the importance of one form of advertising media, the poster, and the place it has in disseminating the forest fire prevention story.
Prevention of man-caused forest fires depends upon public cooperation. The effectiveness of a fire prevention campaign depends upon the expertness with which the messages on the fire prevention posters are used.

It is hoped that this paper may prove to be a useful source of information for the foresters and others engaged in forest fire prevention campaigns.
HIGHLIGHTS IN THE HISTORY OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

"Through the ages civilized man has sensed the need to communicate with other people, to exchange ideas, opinions and information. Ten thousand years ago men were carving announcements and symbols on huge slabs of stone. The early history of the outdoor medium is in reality the history of mass communication. Until the fifteenth century, public posting was the only means, other than the public address, of disseminating information on a wide basis. One of the earliest media of wholesale communication was the stele. The Egyptian stele was hewn from basalt, these stelai or tables were five feet high, two and one-half feet wide and eleven inches thick. They were carved in the writing of the speech of God—hieroglyphics, in the writing of books—demotic, and in the writing of Ueienin—Greek. Through these great blocks of stone the Egyptian advertised his laws, decrees, treaties, and warnings. The factories and offices all had painted signs, while every wall and pillar was used for advertising space.

In 1450 Johannes Gutenberg, a German, invented printing from moveable type, and the dream of duplicated messages became a reality. The whole concept of mass communication changed. Wide commercial application
became economically practical, and advertising, in the modern sense, was launched in the form of the handbill.

The printing press made possible the development of two media where only one had existed throughout history. The handbill, because it could be distributed in quantity, became a "circulating" medium as contrasted with the "posted" bill. The circulated bill was the progenitor of our newspapers and magazines." (1)

In defining a poster the author will use the definition given by Bridge in his textbook "Practical Advertising." Bridge defines a poster as: "A bill board or other display piece formed of printed sheets pasted on a supporting background." (6)

Modern outdoor advertising in the strictest sense refers to the use of the "24-sheet", "6-sheet", or "3-sheet" posters or the bill board type poster. In 1955 The Advertising Council printed 800,000 posters of various kinds, 10,000 three-sheet posters and 30,000 Post Office truck fire prevention posters. The larger size bill board posters, the 24-sheet, and 6-sheet size are not printed.

It is necessary to look at forest fire prevention advertising in the same light as would an advertiser of soap, oil or radios. The "product" being sold is, forest fire prevention. In its modern form the poster is even more important than it was in its original form centuries ago.
The first general national impetus toward organized cooperative protection of state and private forests came in 1911 with enactment of the Weeks Law. Under it, federal funds augmented efforts of state and private owners.

The Clarke-McNary Act, in 1924, enlarged and liberalized Weeks Law provisions and brought the first effective nation-wide program of federal-state cooperation for forest fire control.

Since 1924 fire prevention education by government—state and federal—has been increasing. However, a greater sense of public responsibility was needed. By the latter part of the nineteen-thirties it was evident a grass roots campaign in which the public could take an active part was needed.

The Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign had its beginning in 1942. Business and industry joined with the state and federal governments to insure this country's continuing leadership during a world conflict.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, America was girding to defend herself. Manpower was being drained from peace-time jobs by the Armed Forces, defense plants, and various other war jobs. The forest protection
agencies, mainly state and federal, were losing men to war occupations. Obtaining fire control man-power and equipment for fire fighting presented serious problems.

During the early part of World War II the advertising industry was marshalled under an organization then called The War Advertising Council. This Council was organized, financed and supported by business and industry. One of the first projects accepted by the Council was the wartime forest fire prevention campaign. This campaign was begun with a meeting of U. S. Forest Service officials and advertising executives in Los Angeles early in 1942 to determine methods by which the general public could be induced to cooperate more wholeheartedly in forest fire prevention.

Public response to the organized program to reduce man-caused fires was soon apparent. In the United States fire losses steadily decreased until 1945 when the number of man-caused forest fires reached an all-time low of 124,725 forest fires. The number of man-caused fires up to 1941 averaged 210,000 per year.

However, another factor must be considered. With gasoline rationed and millions of men overseas, it must be admitted that fewer people were using the forests and recreational areas.

By 1950, use of the forested areas by the public had broken all pre-war records. The recreational use of forested areas had increased by approximately 40 per cent.
over 1941, the highest recorded year before World War II.

Theoretically this 40 per cent increase in public use of forest areas could well be expected to result in a corresponding increase of forest fires.

In the five-year period from 1946 to 1950, the number of forest fires had been held to an average of 190,000 a year, as compared to an average of 210,000 fires a year before 1941.

Officially, in 1942, the fire prevention campaign became the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign. It represents a joint effort, and is officially sponsored by the Association of State Foresters of the 43 states

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1The nation-wide Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign is conducted jointly by the State Foresters and the U. S. Forest Service under sponsorship of The Advertising Council. The Council is a non-profit organization founded and supported by American business to conduct advertising campaigns informing U. S. citizens how they can help with national problems such as forest fire prevention, traffic accidents, overcrowded schools.

"In 1954 through The Council, American business contributed $8 million dollars worth of free advertising time and space in support of the Smokey Bear program. Last year the transit advertising industry donated space for the entire months of April and September in 100,000 major cities. The car cards or posters were furnished by one of the federal forest agencies but both the space and labor needed to put them up and take them down were absolutely free. This one donation had an estimated value of $500,000." (32)

As part of their cooperation, The Council assigns a volunteer advertising agency to handle each public service program. Since 1942, Foote, Cone and Belding of Los Angeles has planned each year's forest fire prevention program. All work done by agency personnel is
having forest fire protection responsibilities, and the United States Forest Service.

Effectiveness of the cooperative effort is evident in the lower fire toll in United States. The American public, through the campaigns being conducted by The Advertising Council, state and federal foresters, and forest industry, has heard and read more about the need for preventing forest fires than ever before.

free of charge. If it were necessary to pay Foote, Cone and Belding for its services The Council estimated that the bill would run in excess of $40,000 per year. All of The Council's services are free although they are reimbursed for actual out of pocket expenses. However, no reimbursement of any kind is made for salaries of The Council's staff.

2Man-caused forest fires in national forest in 1953 dropped 14 per cent. Although only incomplete figures were available for the nation as a whole, these indicated that in 1953 the nation experienced the lowest number of man-caused fires in years.

The Forest Service largely attributes this reduction in man-caused forest fires to the nation's increased awareness of forest fire dangers, helped by the Forest Fire Prevention campaign of The Advertising Council as well as by the Keep Green program conducted by the forest industries and the States.
POSTER INFLUENCE IN DISSEMINATION OF THE
FIRE PREVENTION MESSAGE

The impact of mass public service advertising has had a great effect of public cooperation. It has proven to be the rallying point of all groups, organizations, and individuals working in the interest of reducing man-caused forest fires and protecting our forests, ranges and watersheds from destruction by forest fires.

Posters are uniquely equipped to convey the fire prevention messages because they reach the driving and pedestrian public on the streets and highways and in the parks and woods. Because outdoor posters can and do deliver a fire prevention message at a time when motorists, hikers and campers are actually in the forests, they are an extremely useful form of advertising. The poster medium is advantageous and is a valuable tool in the education of forest users.

Advertisers depend a great deal on public opinion surveys, brand recognition tests and numerous other methods for spot checking the effect of their advertising. This type of public recognition test was conducted by The Psychological Research Corporation (9,29) in 1948 to see how well the "Smokey Bear" character was being
recognized. Samplings were made in 138 cities and towns by contacting 2500 people.

The research analysts showed only a photograph of "Smokey" without name or other identification and asked each person if he recognized this character. Eighteen per cent of the people contacted knew Smokey's name and job. A much larger percentage knew he had something to do with forests or parks but did not know his name.  

3"Smokey", the fire preventing bear was born through the efforts of the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign. From the beginning, the advertisers urged the establishment of a symbol which would be readily identified by the public as representing the need to prevent forest fires. In 1944, The Council enlisted the cooperation of the Walt Disney Studios in producing a special supporting poster for the campaign. Disney used his deer character "Bambi" made famous by a movie of the same name.

Following up public interest and response to the animal theme, in 1945, Albert Staehle, well-known cover artist for the Saturday Evening Post and an expert in animal art was commissioned to do a poster. He produced a bear cub, wearing Levi's and a forest rangers hat which looked like the answer to the symbol problem.

However, a name was needed. R. R. Hammatt, director of the forest fire prevention campaign for state and federal forest services at that time called a huddle with council and agency officials and they came up with the name "Smokey". It was a take off of Smokey Joe Ryan, a famous New York City fire chief. From then on Smokey became the permanent standard bearer, and was gradually worked into the basic forest fire prevention theme each year, rather than being used as the supporting poster." (9)

4Complete results of this study are not available. Unfortunately this was a confidential, paid study made for a client. The Psychological Corporation was unable to provide any results. (28)
Prior to this period, Smokey had no identifying name on himself. As a result of this survey, the Research Corporation suggested that Smokey's name be put on either his hat or his belt buckle. It is now shown both places. As yet, no follow up tests have been conducted to see if recognition has improved.

The character Smokey is now the main theme on most of the poster material printed by The Advertising Council. However, it should be realized that the fire prevention campaign conducted by the Council uses all forms of media for displaying the fire prevention message. So now Smokey has become the identifying element of the posters.

It would be extremely difficult to place a true evaluation on any one medium as compared to another. Nevertheless, posters probably play the biggest part in the campaign aimed at the reduction of man-caused forest fires.
CHARACTERISTICS OF OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Outdoor advertising is one of the best ways to communicate with millions of Americans traveling the highways. The ability of outdoor advertising to deliver a message to all types of people in all areas of a given location is one of its great strengths. Outdoor advertisements must attract the public eye through their location and their own attention-getting aspects of size and dominance, color, pictures, brevity of copy and repetition.

Outdoor posters do not move, but are situated so that the public moves passed them. Although the mass-circulation character of this medium fits it especially for the advertising of products, it is also used successfully for conveying ideas of public service.

The poster campaign conducted by The Advertising Council, is directed along educational lines to men, women and children in all walks of life. The campaign acquaints people with the value of trees, and with the contribution that forests make to the economy of their respective states and to the nation.

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The poster medium probably ranks ahead of other major media for frequency of impact afforded, length of life, and the possibility of presenting the appearance of a product or service message very clearly. If comparing the spoken message, radio, against the written message, the printed advertisement, it is well to note that the opportunity for each radio advertisement to accomplish its objective is brief, likewise for the poster. However, once a program is off the air, it is gone for good, whereas a printed advertisement can exert its influence over a period of time.6

Another characteristic which makes the outdoor poster valuable for use in connection with the forest fire prevention campaign is the possibility of placing the prevention message close to, and in, forests and on roads and trails leading into these areas.

Outdoor posters are valuable because they are simple and easy to understand. The keynote to good outdoor posters is simple and easy understood copy. This quality is probably more important in outdoor posters than in other advertising media because outdoor copy must register quickly.

Due to monetary restrictions, one characteristic

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which is not fully exploited in the posters used by government prevention agencies is color. Outdoor advertising differs from other media in that it can use unlimited color. Good color combinations increases the visibility of an advertisement. Color may also make a poster eye-appealing by presenting a setting that is naturally colored. Standard colors usually include a red, an orange, a yellow, a green, and blue. Red, orange, and yellow suggest warmth. Blue and green suggest coolness. These connotations should be taken into account in selecting colors to be used on posters. Warm colors have the best outdoor carrying power. Color often is complex subject matter that is best handled by experts.

The characteristics which help make outdoor posters valuable, and which are found to be essential are: (1) Good means of communication. (2) Mass circulation character. (3) Frequency of impact afforded. (4) Possibility of presenting the message clearly, brevity of text. (5) Pleasing or striking color effect.
LIMITATIONS OF THE OUTDOOR POSTER

Although outdoor posters do offer one of the better ways to advertise products, services, and campaigns such as the fire prevention program it would be presumptuous to think they lack limitations. As in all forms of mass advertising certain objections are voiced by the viewing or listening public.

The principle limitations of outdoor posting, for some situations, are the lack of flexibility in the copy, the impossibility of showing fine details, the necessary brevity of the copy. Outdoor posters probably have less of the prestige building quality that may be found in other forms of media.

Outdoor posters have the tendency to over simplify a situation or condition. This may be one of the weaknesses in the fire prevention program. Too often the public is asked to help prevent forest fires, but, the majority of the posters do not tell, or show by diagram how to put out a fire. This weakness probably lies in the fact that the poster message is delivered to people in motion, and may be exposed to them for only a brief period of time, and it must often be seen at some distance.
OBJECTIONS TO POSTERS

When selling a product most advertiser's try to present their material in a manner not objectionable to the public.

Many national organizations have taken a strong stand against bill board posters because they are objectionable from an aesthetic standpoint.

"In outdoor advertising, as in broadcasting, the advertiser is encroaching on public domain and should not indulge in excess."7

It is well to remember when putting up outdoor posters, even those pertaining to fire prevention, to not indulge in excessive posting. A fire prevention poster neatly mounted and properly displayed has the possibility of calling attention to itself and probably will not bring objections by the public.

Part of the annoyance caused by posters results from bad taste, misleading copy, unsightly color combinations, and poor quality of display. The Advertising Council prepares the fire prevention posters

in the best possible form, thus, poor displays should be easy to avoid.

It is poor business for any advertiser to put his advertising in any spot where permission to do so has not been obtained. Sufficient suitable places are available for advertising without offending good taste.

It is possible for those engaged in fire prevention work to help overcome objections to the outdoor display by using care regarding possible defacement of landscape by not interfering with scenic views.

Ragged looking and obsolete posters however old or new, should be replaced. Poorly maintained posters of all sizes and shapes hardly seem desirable for use in displaying the fire prevention message.
IMPORTANCE OF PROPER POSTER PLACEMENT FOR EFFECTIVENESS

The strength of outdoor posting lies in its ability to deliver a message to all types of people in all areas adjacent to a given location. This result is achieved through the careful placement of the posters. In all forms of outdoor posting, position is exceedingly important. Planning should be given to placement of the fire prevention poster.

A number of interesting studies have been made by the Traffic Audit Bureau to determine the best geographic location of poster panels and the composition of the circulation around them.

The Traffic Audit Bureau discovered, in its Fort Wayne, Indiana, study that there was a considerable turnover on successive days in the over-all people comprising the traffic stream at any given location.

Studies of this nature can be useful in the placement of fire prevention posters. A little study and investigation of the traffic patterns and the public routes of moving about in an area will reveal the points

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8The Traffic Audit Bureau, was formed in 1934 for the purpose of furnishing advertisers with uniform, impartial data on outdoor advertising circulation.
of heavy travel. After these routes have been determined posters can be placed in such away as to attract attention.

When considering posters for use along highways and in communities, the suggestions offered by the Outdoor Advertising Association are helpful. The Association suggests the long head-on-to-traffic location as best. The least valuable is the panel parallel to traffic when placed among other advertising posters. Any medium that will provide an economical means for reaching the vast numbers of persons traveling the highways will be of some value to the advertiser unless it alienates the traveler. The potential value of the highway poster is measured in terms of the number of persons passing during a given interval of time.

Impressing the client with a fire prevention message at the right time, in the right place, and under the right circumstances may help lessen the dangers of man-caused forest fires. This may be accomplished best by following the principles used in "point-of-sale" selling.

Point-of-sale selling is perhaps the weakest link in the existing forest fire prevention program.

9The Outdoor Advertising Association, or its local representative can be found in the classified section of a local telephone directory or by writing to them. 24 West Erie Street, Chicago 10, Illinois.
Point-of-sale selling methods by advertising can best be explained by drawing an analogy between selling a nationally advertised product and selling forest fire prevention.

When a manufacturer decides to introduce a new product on a nation-wide basis, his first job is to develop public recognition of the product. Public acceptance of this product must first be built around brand recognition. The advertising agency calls in artists, copywriters, and slogan men, and all working together they come up with ideas, develop a slogan and select different channels of advertising before the promotion of the product is started.

After the campaign has started colorful posters and car cards will begin to become noticeable showing the new product. Undoubtedly it will not make much of an impression at first, but it is hoped by the manufacturer that it will register on the subconscious mind.

Perhaps a week later a radio commercial may be heard or the product may be seen on television. An average person subjected to a campaign of this type rarely gets the urge to run right down and buy the product, but in the subconscious mind there is building up a friendly reaction towards the product.

There seems nothing very different in this line of operation from that being done in the forest fire prevention campaign. Posters point out the need for each
individual to use care to prevent forest fires. Radio and television programs drive home the same idea.

With coverage of this type by the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign one might wonder how a manufacturer could do any better selling job than that which has been accomplished to date on forest fire prevention.

It is here that the point-of-sale merchandising comes into the story. After the business firm develops public acceptance and brand recognition is no longer a problem, they concentrate on reaching the potential customer at the point where he is most apt to be exposed to the product. This is point-of-sale merchandising.

The aim of the fire prevention poster is to sell the public the idea of forest fire prevention. Good poster placement at the right moment, in the right location is necessary to bring about desired responses.
POSTER REPERTITION AND TIMING APPEALS

The keystone of advertising effectiveness is repetition. Outdoor advertising is, or may be kept, constantly in the public eye. Not only can it deliver a message to almost every individual in a given location, but, it has the opportunity of delivering it many times over to the entire area within a given period.

Fire prevention can best be sold by constantly repeating the messages. Repeting the message to the same viewer is effective. One look, by the viewer, at a poster may not make any impression, however, if the forest user is confronted with the fire prevention message from the time he starts for the forest and recreational areas, and while in the areas, the message may begin to take on a meaning. By the second or third exposure, the viewer may be aware of the forest fire danger, and what he can do to prevent a fire from starting.

It is suggested by the author that the fire prevention theme be displayed from the city to the highway; from the highway into the forests; and then further the cause by keeping the message before the people who are actually in the forested areas.

It is important to keep repeating the fire prevention theme inasmuch as people do forget. It is
equally important to consider the timing of the fire prevention appeal.

America's moving public is in the nation's forests and range areas the year round. One of the most opportune times to reach this traveling public is while they are in the forests and using the recreational areas. At this time they are moving about and most likely to be conscious of fire prevention messages around them. Fire prevention campaigns, using posters, should be geared to the seasons of heaviest public pressure on the forested areas.

In this country there are many regional variations in terrain, types of vegetation, and season of greatest fire danger. The normal fire season in the forests of the Eastern and Central States are spring and fall. Here the appeals should be timed to meet the spring forest users and the fall visitors: hunters, fishermen and hikers. The normal fire season may extend through the winter months in the Deep South. In the Western States, most of the forests are in the mountainous areas; the dry summer months are normally the period of greatest forest fire danger.

Poster campaigns should be timed to the season or seasons that best fit the locality. Messages pertaining to preventing man-caused forest fires should be kept before the public, inasmuch as people usually need to be reminded. Timeliness itself is not an appeal, but,
an appeal may or may not be timely.

Repetition of the fire prevention message, and proper timing of the "Prevent Forest Fires" appeal, coincide; both may be considered necessary to sell the idea of being careful with fire in the forests to the public.
HIGHWAY FIRE PREVENTION POSTERS

The highways leading to and through the forests are undoubtedly the most suitable locations for construction of the larger type fire prevention poster.

Usually there is the need for a poster that will tell an interesting story in a very few words and it must be readable from a car traveling at 50 to 60 miles per hour.

Posters running in a sequence or series provide a good way of telling a story. Using a combination of illustrations and words may prove to be very useful in extolling the principles of forest fire prevention.

Poster displays of the type shown in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 can be put on either side of the road right-of-way and placed in sets of four. The picture painted on each sign, shown by the photographs, illustrates the words. The story is told in sequence. No. 1 reads, "Careless Smokers Start Fires"; No. 2, "Don't Be A Flipper"; No. 3, "Use Your Ash Tray"; and No. 4, "Thank You".

This type poster is designed to hang on gibbets at 500 or 600 foot intervals. They are constructed as follows: The boards are three by four feet of 3/8-inch Marine plywood. They are treated with three coats of
Figure 1. Highway Fire Prevention Poster. No. 1 of a series.
DON'T BE A FLIPPER

Figure 2. Highway Fire Prevention Poster. No. 2 of a series.
Figure 3. Highway Fire Prevention Poster. No. 3 of a series.
Figure 4. Highway Fire Prevention Poster. No. 4 of a series.
paint before letters and designs are painted. Only pure
colors in oil are used.

The outlines of the letters and figures are
placed on the boards by the use of burnt sienna powder
dusted along the perforated lines of the original paper
copy. They are then painted free hand. After the paint
is dry the boards are given three spray coats of clean,
waterproof lacquer.

The frame is made of stained peeled poles which
are bolted together diagonally at the corners. A good
groove is rabbetted out in the frame for the sign. The
edges of the plywood are treated with white lead before
being placed in the grooves.

The cost of constructing the first set of signs
will naturally run high. However, each successive print
can be made cheaper. The price of these posters under
today costs is approximately $35.00 per sign, exclusive
of frame and posts. (19)

An individual poster as shown in Figure 5, with
accompanying construction diagram, Figure 6, may prove
to be useful along main highways where a considerable
number of man-caused fires occur as a result of people
throwing burning material from their automobiles.

The poster shown in the photograph, Figure 5,
is constructed as follows: Plywood is used for the poster
panel.
Figure 5. Highway or road side fire prevention poster panel.
HIGHWAY FIRE PREVENTION SIGN BOARD

Removable plate to allow sign panel to be taken out during non-fire season.

6" screws

1/2 iron rod threaded both ends

Section of iron U-trough welded to rod

Redwood post

Ground line

8" x 3"
Two redwood sawed posts, 8 by 8 inches by 12 feet, are used as uprights, (the type of wood for the upright can be optional, however, it is suggested by the author that they be creosoted up to a foot above ground line). One post is routed to accommodate one end of the sign, the other is supplied with a removable plate (See Figure 6). Screws through the posts and plywood minimize vibrations caused by wind. One inch below the lower edge of the sign panel, a half-inch (\(\frac{1}{2}\)"") iron rod passes from the outside of one post to the outside of the other.

This rod is threaded at both ends to allow it to be tightened to hold the sign secure. A section of iron U-trough welded to the middle of the rod, and fitting snugly over a section of the lower center edge of the sign helps, too, to hold the sign against wind vibrations.

A strip of metal linoleum counter edging placed along the top edge of the poster protects the plywood from rain and weather. By removing the iron rod and the screws holding the panel, the poster may be taken off. (11)

The smaller type posters, usually found in campgrounds, on trucks, in stores and busses are available in various sizes. They may be obtained by writing to the Advertising Council, Inc., State or Federal forest agencies.

In considering the actual construction of high
way type poster panels for use in displaying the fire
prevention message it is important to keep in mind
several factors involved in determining placement, i.e.
height, location, angle to the highway.

The most recent development in the outdoor
poster concerning angle to the highway is the use of a
steel panel placed at a 90 degree angle. This angle
makes it possible to utilize both sides of the poster
panel. Prior to the development of this style panel
the angle considered best was 45 degrees. However,
this angle only allows for utilization of one side of
the panel.

In regarding height of poster panels it is
necessary to consider the topography of the area adjacent
to the highway right-of-way. The signs should be so
constructed so that the actual message is higher than
a car. On low areas the sign should be built up or
raised to at least eye level or slightly higher.

In considering the location of the poster panel
on the highway right-of-way the Outdoor Advertising
Association suggests to its agents the use of the "long-
shot" approach. Consider an area in which it is possible
for the on coming traffic to view the sign at long
distance; here again the height is important, if placed
too low the view of the poster is limited by passing
traffic coming from an opposite direction.
The use which an agency or an individual makes of the various forms of outdoor posters in advertising will depend to a great degree on proper use of the poster. It should be evident, however, that the variety of forms within the structure of the outdoor advertising industry offers almost unlimited opportunities to express and expose the fire prevention message again and again to the public as they move about on the highways and in the forest and range areas.
SUMMARY

It is a long way from the stelai of ancient Egypt to the modern advertising media as it exists and is employed in the United States today. Its vitality and its usefulness stand higher today than at any point during its long history.

The purpose of a poster, whether it is intended to help sell a product or promote a cause, is, like all advertising, first to arrest attention and second, to create a desired impression.

Overcoming carelessness and ignorance is the most difficult problem facing fire prevention personnel today inasmuch as it involves changing the habits of people. It is the opinion of the author that forest fire prevention posters may be classed as the best medium to use to emphasize to the public the dangers inherent in the improper use of fire in the forests.

It may be inferred that the downward trend in man-caused forest fires is a caused effect. The best explanation of this is that money spent for organized and sustained fire prevention programs is buying a significant reduction in the frequency of man-caused forest fires in United States today.

As a result of educational efforts, the American
public has seen and heard more about forest fire prevention than ever before.

Fire prevention posters have played, and undoubtedly will continue to play, a big part in the over-all campaign aimed at reducing man-caused forest fires. Just how many fires have been prevented by this form of advertising is impossible to determine. Undoubtedly, however, the poster along with other advertising media has been responsible for the fact that the average number of man-caused fires per year has been decreased by 20,000 during the years since World War II. This reduction has occurred in spite of increases in registrations in national forest and parks, in the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, in motor travel, and in other factors which indicate the public use of forests and recreational areas has increased substantially in post-war years.

In planning a forest fire prevention campaign it would be well to keep in mind some of the advantages of using outdoor placement of posters. The poster possesses the attention factor of color, size, action and brevity of copy. It may have the attraction factors of harmony, unity, simplicity, power, action, clarity and beauty. The display can be erected along the routes of the crowd, where it can carry its message with no demand on the public for excessive reading time. It has the potential of stressing its story with day-to-day repetition.
Preparation of a fire prevention poster campaign should involve determining steps to be taken and assigning specific responsibilities for each phase of the work. Necessary steps in the preparation should include the following items: (1) Selection and mapping location of posters. (2) Ordering posters, and constructing and establishing poster boards. (3) Setting time schedules such as dates for putting poster up and taking them down. (4) Inspecting work.

The poster can be used as a quick forceful reminder with impact, reminding the public to prevent forest fires.
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