

2026 PARK & RECREATION PROFESSIONALS DAY

Toolkit



This toolkit by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society is intended to help park professionals celebrate Park and Recreation Professionals Day. The toolkit includes template social media posts, media releases, graphics, posters, logos, and more to help spread the word and celebrate park professionals.

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Every third Friday in July, we celebrate Pennsylvania Park & Recreation Professionals Day to honor the people who work to provide the programs and facilities we all enjoy.

This year, please consider it a tribute to your local park and recreation providers to visit a park – and perhaps send a little thanks to the park and recreation professionals who made your visit possible.



Park & Recreation Professionals Day Concept

It's a safe bet we can all agree on the following. *That when:*

- you visit a park, it is clean, safe, and ready to use.
- your family goes swimming, the lifeguards are well-trained and the water quality is optimal.
- your grandchild visits the playground, you know it is maintained to all safety standards.
- your loved one with a disability wants to camp, swim, paddle or fish, all facilities are well-marked, well-maintained and easily accessible.
- you attend a public festival, all safety and security systems are capable and functioning.
- your elderly parents look for enriching and companionable activities, they can always find them.
- your children attend day camp, you are certain of their safe and appropriate physical, cognitive and social development.
- you visit urban woodlands, gardens and greenspaces, the attractive assets are well-cared for and healthy.
- your teens participate in youth sports, they thrive in the coaching, playing, and growing.
- you want to bike to the park, grocery store, library or work, you are able to make those connections, free from all hazards.

We can agree that these are all reasonable expectations of our park and recreation facilities and programs. And since they are, it is fitting to credit the park and recreation professionals who provide them.

The third Friday in July is Pennsylvania Park and Recreation Professionals Day. It honors those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to provide high quality programs and facilities we desire and expect in our parks and public spaces.

This July, consider it a tribute to your local park and recreation providers to visit a park and enjoy its facilities and services. And just perhaps mention a little thanks to the programmer, manager, maintainer, landscaper, facilitator, lifeguard, coach, event organizer or caretaker.

Park and Recreation Professionals Day is celebrated during National Park and Recreation Month, and is a function of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society – the statewide association providing professional leadership, development, advocacy, and resources to those working to enrich the lives of all Pennsylvanians.

GOOD IDEAS for meaningful recognition

Meaningful recognition is specific, relevant and timely. Pennsylvania Park and Recreation Professionals Day is a custom-designed opportunity to express why your staff and volunteers are important and valued.

All park and recreation agencies are encouraged to host a public event on or about the third Friday of July, to celebrate those who drive public engagement and provide the indispensable services that thriving communities require every day.

Your celebration may certainly be a part of another event. The most meaningful occasions invite the public and local officials to join the festivities, which may include entertainment, refreshments, presentations or demos by youth or summer camp groups, photo opportunities, and a ceremony with brief remarks. And of course, your valued employees and volunteers as the honored guests!

Share your thanks publicly on your social media channels, which helps boost the value of your services in the eyes of your park users and public officials.

Here are a few inexpensive ideas to creatively express your gratitude:

- free day pass to the pool/gym/rec center
- extra day of personal leave or half day off
- go public with your appreciation
- handwritten note of appreciation
- ice cream sundae bar
- Dress Down / Dress Up Day
- gift card to favorite retailer or restaurant
- stock breakroom with popular snacks
- afternoon movie break or cookies
- website appreciation for staff photos, bios
- hire a caricature artist to draw portraits
- extended lunch break
- free car wash
- thank you video
- staff pizza luncheon, picnic, barbeque or a food truck lunch
- VIP parking spot
- random acts of fun
- share some swag
- sincere words of affirmation
- LinkedIn recommendation
- staff field trip to museum
- create a dog-friendly office
- small live plant or flower arrangement
- office upgrade allowance
- make part of decision making process
- recognition for non-work achievements
- team-building day out

Press Release Template

[Agency Letterhead]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Contact Name]

[Agency Name]

[Phone]

[Email]

Celebrate Park and Recreation Professionals Day at [Agency Name]

[CITY, STATE] – July is Park and Recreation Month across the nation. Here in Pennsylvania, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, we honor those who work tirelessly behind the scenes to provide the parks and recreation programs and facilities that we enjoy every day.

Join [local municipality/state park/Friends Group] in celebrating PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS DAY on [insert date], to honor those who plan, provide, and operate our parks, trails, programs, and facilities for all our citizens.

[INSERT ANNOUNCEMENT of any special celebrations or tie-ins with events on our about that day.]

[INSERT QUOTE from agency explaining the importance of parks and recreation in the local community.]

As a tribute to your local parks and recreation providers, make a plan to visit a local park or recreation facility on [insert date.] Take the time to meet with and thank a programmer, manager, maintainer, landscaper, facilitator, lifeguard, coach, event organizer, or caretaker.

To learn more about this day, visit [add local website information] and www.prps.org/parkreccday. If you love parks and support your local professionals, share the love on social media channels using the hashtags #ParkandRecDay. #GoodforPA

About [[INSERT NAME of Agency]]

[INSERT statement of the work or mission of the local agency.]

About the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS)

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS) is the principal statewide association providing professional development, leadership, advocacy and resources for those working and volunteering in the parks and recreation field.

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PRPS's Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

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Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society to Celebrate Park Professionals Across the State

City, State – Date – The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society welcomes all Pennsylvanians to visit parks on **[insert date]** to celebrate Park & Recreation Professionals Day. Across Pennsylvania, communities can show their appreciation for the numerous park and recreation professionals who continue to work to keep our parks safe year-round.

Park goers will have the opportunity to use the facilities to celebrate over 8,000 volunteers, landscapers, and caretakers who maintain parks by keeping the parks clean, safe, and accessible. With over 6,000 state and local parks including athletic fields, playgrounds and trails, these park professionals are also honored for the planning, programming and operations that take place.

To learn more about Park & Recreation Professionals Day, visit PRPS.org. If you love parks and support your local professionals, share the love on social media channels using the hashtags #ParkandRecDay and #GoodforPA

About the Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society (PRPS)

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS) is the principal statewide association providing professional development, leadership, advocacy and resources for those working and volunteering in the parks and recreation field.

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The [County/Township/Borough] of [Municipality Name]
PROCLAMATION
PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS DAY
[insert PRP date]

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *promotes physical, emotional and mental health and wellness* through organized and self-directed fitness, play, and activity; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *supports the economic vitality of communities* by providing frontline jobs, childcare for the essential work force and promoting community revitalization; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *creates memorable experiences* through engaging virtual and physically distanced programs, dynamic online events and new learning opportunities designed to keep families active while stay-at-home orders are in place and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *fosters social cohesiveness* in communities by celebrating diversity, providing spaces to come together peacefully, modeling compassion, promoting social equity, connecting social networks, and ensuring all people have access to its benefits; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *supports human development* and endless learning opportunities that foster social, intellectual, physical and emotional growth in people of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *strengthens community identity* by providing facilities and services that reflect and celebrate community character, heritage, culture, history, aesthetics and landscape; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *facilitates community problem and issue resolution* by providing safe spaces to come together peacefully and facilitating conversations and services in order that our communities may heal both physically and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *sustains and stewards our natural resources* by protecting habitats and open space, connecting people to nature, and promoting the ecological function of parkland; and

WHEREAS, Parks and Recreation *supports safe, vibrant, attractive, progressive communities* that make life better through positive alternatives offered in their recreational opportunities;

WHEREAS, the [governing body] *supports the skilled work* of park and recreation professionals to strengthen community cohesion and resiliency, connect people with nature and each other, and provide opportunities for healthful living, social equity and environmental sustainability;

WHEREAS, the [governing body] *values the essential services* that park and recreation professionals and volunteers perform to provide recreational and developmental enrichment for our children, youth, adults and seniors; and to ensure our parks and recreational facilities are clean, safe, and ready to use.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the [governing body] does hereby proclaim [insert PRP date] as “**Pennsylvania Park and Recreation Professionals Day**” in [municipality.]

ADOPTED this [] day of [month] [year].

[municipality governing board]

[seal]

[name, title]

ATTEST:

[name, title]

[name, title]

Social Media Samples

We encourage you to use these sample messages to help raise awareness of Park & Recreation Professionals Day among your customers and followers. We also want to see how you're celebrating, too. You can send us photos, reels and videos leading up to the day to eschnellbaugh@prps.org

Tag PRPS & GOOD in your posts, too:

PRPS

Facebook: @PARecandPark; Instagram: @paparkrec; LinkedIn: /pennsylvania-recreation-park-society/

GOOD

Facebook: @GoodforPA; Twitter: @GoodForPA; Instagram: @goodforpa

Hashtags #ParkAndRecDay #GoodforPA

Sample Social Media Posts (Share photos of your staff and volunteers!)

In Advance:

- Did you know? Parks and Recreation Professionals Day is happening on **[insert date!]** Be sure to thank your local parks professionals.
- Today is Park & Recreation Professionals Day! Thank you to our incredible team who continue to work hard and provide such great programs to our community.
- Will you be stopping by **[[LOCATION]]** to celebrate the hard work put in by our team for Park & Recreation Professionals Day?
- What's your favorite part about **[[PARK]]**? Share your photos below to help us celebrate Park & Recreation Professionals Day on **[insert date!]**
- In advance of Park & Recreation Professionals Day happening on **[insert date!]**, we're proud to share the stories of some of our staff. **[[ADD IN STORY OF STAFF TO SHOW APPRECIATION]]**
- Testimonials to share on social media
- [Good Air Episode #4: How to Champion Your Local Park](#)

Day Of:

- Shout out to our amazing team here at **[[LOCATION]]**. Thank you for your dedication and hard work that make parks accessible to our community.
- Thank you to all of our visitors who are as passionate about **[[LOCATION]]** as we are.
- For this year's #ParkAndRecDay, we're asking you all to share some of your favorite park memories! Share any pictures and stories in the comments below, or tag us at **[[YOUR HANDLE]]**
- [Download FB Live Best Practices](#) – to use on PRP Day

After:

- Thank you to everyone who shared their park and recreation memories with us - we're proud to be able to support our communities and provide a necessary outdoor space!

Marketing Materials

Here are some ways to use the poster in your community:

- Hang up in your department
- Print it out and post it in your community
- Take to all events
- Distribute to anyone who stops in the office
- Post it at the parks or pools

Logos – You can use the logos in your email signature!



Poster



Download Graphics for the following:

- Social media posts
- FB cover photo
- Banner Ads
- Poster
- Logos

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16isqUhpmpcfait_B8YX-JFjgONlgAq2?usp=drive_link



*Thank you for helping us celebrate and spread
the word about Park & Recreation
Professionals Day!*

#ParkAndRecDay