



# INKLINGS

Bulletin of Interpretive Ideas

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## Frequently Asked Questions About Signs

Lise Schools

Interpretive Ideas recently sponsored a commercial booth at the Mid-America Trails and Greenways conference. The three most frequently asked questions are summarized here:

### Current Project List

- **Indiana Department of Natural Resources**  
*Interpretive Sign Design*  
Clifty Falls State Park  
O'Bannon Woods  
Mounds State Park  
Spring Mill

*Interpretive Master Plans*  
McCormick's Creek

*Interpretive Exhibit Mgmt.*

McCormick's Creek SP  
Indiana Dunes SP  
Turkey Run SP

- **Bloomington Parks and Recreation (IN)**  
B-Line Trail signs,  
Phase II

- **East Lansing Parks (MI)**  
*Interpretive Signs*

- **Noblesville Stormwater Management (IN)**  
*Interpretive Signs*

**1. What materials do you use?** For the past several years, Interpretive Ideas has used high-pressure laminates and fiberglass embedded materials for their signs. Both have been successful in vandal- and weather-resistance.

**High-pressure laminate** exterior signs are a 1/2"-thick solid piece of laminate. The sign image is printed on the laminate itself and coated with UV resistant protection. Pedestals are attached directly to the laminate using threaded pre-drilled holes. There is no frame.



High-pressure laminate

**Fiberglass embedded (fge)** signs involve printing the image on paper using UV resistant inks and embedding the image in fiberglass. A metal backing attaches to the pedestals and adds thickness to the sign. Most signs require a frame, although frameless fge signs are becoming available.



Fiberglass embedded

These are not the only successful materials out there, but are the materials we've found to work well.

**2. How much does it cost?** There are numerous factors that influence cost, among them: sign size, number of signs, number of duplicate signs, type of mount structure, shipping distance, amount of design work (text writing, graphics generation), artwork/photography use costs. A recent quote for a 36" x 24" high-pressure laminate (hpl) sign including the panel, a single pedestal mount structure, color sample, proof and shipping came to slightly over \$1100. This did not include design costs which may add another several hundred dollars to the price.

**3. How does it hold up to vandalism?** Nothing is vandal-proof, but some materials hold up fairly well. Paint, sharpies and lipstick can be removed from hpl using their recommended products. Cigarette lighters can discolor the image, but will not burn it. Knives and other sharp objects will leave a mark. Since the material is a solid laminate, however, there is no risk of breaking a seal resulting in water damage. This is the same with heavy blows and buckshot. A ding or mark results, but the sign does not shatter.



Discoloration from exposure to 30 seconds of open flame



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## Announcements

Our *new web site* is up! Visit it at [www.interpretiveideas.com](http://www.interpretiveideas.com). All past issues of Inklings are available as pdfs on the site.

Would you like to *receive Inklings electronically*? Join the several who do by emailing your request to [lise@interpretiveideas.com](mailto:lise@interpretiveideas.com).

**Graffiti removal product.** One of our high-pressure laminate (hpl) sign companies recommended the products Shadow Max and Smooth Max for removing all types of graffiti. It was tried by a client who had successful results with the product.