



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-O

72 NOV 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND  
DISTRICT COMMANDS, ATTN: CHIEFS, CONSTRUCTION-  
OPERATIONS DIVISIONS

SUBJECT: Promotional Items and Government Ethics Standards

1. Recently, I requested that the Office of the Chief Counsel review the practice of using promotional products containing the names of private businesses and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This request was the result of a recent practice by Park Rangers of providing McDonald's coupons, redeemable for a free ice cream, to young visitors who were observed acting in a water safe manner. The coupons were provided free to the Corps staff for distribution, contained both the Corps and McDonald's insignias and stated that the promotion was a dual effort of McDonald's and the Corps.
2. Engineer Regulation and Engineer Pamphlet 1130-2-500, Chapters 11 (Contributions Program) and 12, (Challenge Cost-Sharing Program) establish Civil Works policy guidance for such programs. This guidance permits the acceptance of cash, funds, materials and services for a multitude of programs and encourages Corps personnel to seek out contributions and cost-sharing opportunities consistent with the Corps mission.
3. The Office of the Chief Counsel determined that the use of the Corps insignia and the statement of dual sponsorship gives the perception that the Corps endorses McDonald's and, thus, violates Office of Government Ethics standards. They did state, however, that if the coupons did not contain any reference to the Corps or any display of the Corps insignia, that project staff may distribute the coupons as part of their efforts to promote water safety.
4. Any cooperative or challenge partnership activity using promotional products that contain private business names must follow this same policy and be consistent with the Corps mission.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

CHARLES M. HESS  
Chief, Operations Division  
Directorate of Civil Works