



**Department of Management Services  
Division of Real Estate Development and Management**

**Accident Prevention Sign Requirements  
(OSHA 29 CFR 1926.200)**

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## INTRODUCTION

These accident prevention signage regulations and guidelines are promulgated under the Occupational Safety & Health Act, Title 29 CFR 1910.200. This standard covers key components required on all Department of Management Services (DMS) projects. This document will define DMS sign responsibilities for maintenance personnel and contractors (including subcontractors) hired by DMS. This policy outlines current OSHA standards for providing accident prevention signage on construction project sites, maintenance operations, etc.

## POLICY

Department of Management Services maintenance staff and contractors working on DMS-owned facilities shall follow the signage requirements under OSHA 29 CFR 1926.200 and newly adopted ANSI-Z535 standards identified herein.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to establish a safe and universal means of signage notification for potential safety and health hazards on project sites or during general maintenance operations. Signs shall be posted on construction or maintenance operations project sites per OSHA standards/requirements.

## DEFINITIONS

OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration

ANSI – American National Standards Institute

MUTCD – Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

USASI – United States of America Standards Institute (Now ANSI)

## PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of Management Services is committed to providing a safe work environment to its employees and **visitors**. The Department of Management Services will comply with related regulatory agency requirements. It is DMS' goal to prevent and/or reduce the occurrence of accidents and associated risk through cooperative efforts of all employees and DMS-contracted (and subcontracted) personnel.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (EH&S)

Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for the development and administration of the accident prevention signage policy. This is a generic document developed by EH&S to provide reference documentation to existing OSHA signage requirements. It will be updated as the regulatory requirements change.

## DMS PROJECT SIGN POSTING REQUIREMENTS

1. All signs to be used on a project site by contractors (and subcontractors) hired by DMS must be approved in advance by the project manager before use.
2. **Hand-made signs (paper, cardboard, plastic, etc.) shall never be used at any DMS project site.** Safety signs shall conform to OSHA requirements and shall be provided by a vendor or created professionally out of impervious materials (plastic, metal, vinyl, laminated card stock, etc.).

3. All safety and hazard signs shall comply with OSHA 29 CFR 1926.200 standards identified in this policy. The Department of Management Services' maintenance personnel and contractors (including subcontractors) hired by DMS may also utilize signage in compliance with ANSI – Z535 Standards effective Sept. 11, 2013, (see reference standard included in this policy).
4. Acceptable OSHA signs may also be **printed in color and laminated** for permanent use from the following websites:

<http://www.freesignage.com/index.php>

<http://www.online-sign.com/>

## OSHA STANDARD

### 29 CFR 1926.200 Accident Prevention Signs and Tags.

(a) *General.* Signs and symbols required by this subpart shall be visible at all times when work is being performed, and shall be removed or covered promptly when the hazards no longer exist.

(b) *Danger signs.*

(1) Danger signs shall be used only where an immediate hazard exists, and shall follow the specifications illustrated in Figure 1 of ANSI Z35.1-1968 or in Figures 1 to 13 of ANSI Z535.2-2011, incorporated by reference in §1926.6.

(2) Danger signs shall have red as the predominate color for the upper panel; black outline on the borders; and a white lower panel for additional sign wording.

(c) *Caution signs.*

(1) Caution signs shall be used only to warn against potential hazards or to caution against unsafe practices, and shall follow the specifications illustrated in Figure 4 of ANSI Z35.1-1968 or in Figures 1 to 13 of ANSI Z535.2-2011, incorporated by reference in §1926.6.

(2) Caution signs shall have yellow as the predominate color; black upper panel and borders; yellow lettering of "caution" on the black panel; and the lower yellow panel for additional sign wording. Black lettering shall be used for additional wording.



(3) The standard color of the background shall be yellow; and the panel, black with yellow letters. Any letters used against the yellow background shall be black. The colors shall be those of opaque glossy samples as specified in Table 1 of ANSI Z53.1-1967 or in Table 1 of ANSI Z535.1-2006(R2011), incorporated by reference in §1926.6.

(d) *Exit signs.* Exit signs, when required, shall be printed in legible red letters, not less than 6 inches high, on a white field and the principal stroke of the letters shall be at least 3/4 inch wide.

(e) *Safety instruction signs.* Safety instruction signs, when used, shall be white with a green upper panel with white letters to convey the principal message. Any additional wording on the sign shall be black letters on the white background.

(f) *Directional signs.* Directional signs, other than automotive traffic signs specified in paragraph (g) of this section, shall be white with a black panel and a white directional symbol. Any additional wording on the sign shall be black letters on the white background.

(g) *Traffic signs.*

(1) Construction areas shall be posted with legible traffic signs at points of hazard.

(2) All traffic control signs or devices used for protection of construction workers shall conform to Part VI of the MUTCD, 1988 Edition, Revision 3, or Part VI of the MUTCD, Millennium Edition, incorporated by reference in §1926.6.

(h) *Accident prevention tags.*

(1) Accident prevention tags shall be used as a temporary means of warning employees of an existing hazard, such as defective tools, equipment, etc. They shall not be used in place of, or as a substitute for, accident prevention signs.

(2) For accident prevention tags, employers shall follow specifications that are similar to those in Figures 1 to 4 of ANSI Z35.2-1968 or Figures 1 to 8 of ANSI Z535.5-2011, incorporated by reference in §1926.6.

(i) **Additional rules.** ANSI Z35.1-1968, ANSI Z535.2-2011, ANSI Z35.2-1968, and ANSI Z535.5-2011, incorporated by reference in §1926.6, contain rules in addition to those specifically prescribed in this subpart. The employer shall comply with ANSI Z35.1-1968 or ANSI Z535.2-2011, and ANSI Z35.2-1968 or Z535.5-2011, with respect to such additional rules.

[44 FR 8577, Feb. 9, 1979; 44 FR 20940, April 6, 1979, as amended at 58 FR 35173, June 30, 1993; 67 FR 57736, Sept. 12, 2002; 69 FR 18803, April 9, 2004; 78 FR 35567, June 13, 2013; 78 FR 66642, Nov. 6, 2013]

### **ANSI - Z535 Standard (New)**

For decades, OSHA regulations for workplace safety signs were based on outdated formats that did not align with the latest safety communication standards and their state-of-the-art warnings technology. These sign and tag regulations had not been updated since their inception in 1971, which referenced the 1967 and 1968 versions of the USASI Z53 and Z35 standards.

**However, on Sept. 11, 2013 new OSHA regulations went into effect.** OSHA updated its regulations to incorporate the latest ANSI Z535 (2011) standards. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's updated regulations incorporate the most recent (2011) versions of ANSI - Z535 standards. To avoid imposing additional costs on facility owners, the ANSI Z535-2011 references appear next to the 1967 USASI Z53 and 1968 USASI Z35 references.

Employers are able to continue to use the same signs and tags they are using now to meet their OSHA compliance obligations **and to use the newer designs (ANSI Z535) to improve workplace safety.**

## **ANSI Z 535 Objective**

The objective of OSHA's update is to advance workplace safety by allowing employers to use the latest ANSI Z535 standards for signage, taking advantage of the improved safety communication technology of the newer standards. Signs and tags that are intelligently designed to meet the 2011 ANSI Z535 standards:

- Provide the information viewers need to make safe decisions, such as the nature of the hazard, the consequence of interaction with the hazard, and how to avoid the hazard;
- Embody human factors research on effective warnings and modern risk assessment methodologies;
- Communicate safety to non-English speaking workers with multiple languages and graphical symbol panels; and
- Meet current legal criteria for "adequate warnings" as defined by the past 30 years of U.S. case law.

## **A Notable Change**

In the past, OSHA has allowed the use of the latest ANSI Z535 standards because they shared the same basic document as OSHA's past regulations. However, prior to the September 2013 regulation update, facility owners using ANSI Z535 signs or tags would run the risk of being cited for violating OSHA standards because the OSHA standards only reference the old 1967-1968 standards (called a "de minimus citation").

**The new rule allows for use of the latest ANSI Z535 signage without the barrier of a "de minimus citation."**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's commitment is a step forward in improving safety, reducing compliance uncertainty, and better protecting workers of all backgrounds. Organizations can now utilize the advances in warning technology established in the latest ANSI Z535 standards for facility signs and tags and be in compliance with OSHA.

## **Key Components for ANSI Z535**

1. The purpose of ANSI Z535 is to use a standardized system of safety signage that is universally recognizable and understandable.
2. Signal Words appear on the top of the sign panel to indicate a hazard level.
3. Universal graphic symbols are used to supplement the sign panel information.
4. There are a total of five sign categories with "signal words" on top of the sign. They are prioritized as follows with the most significant hazard severity level:

**DANGER, WARNING, CAUTION, NOTICE, SAFETY INSTRUCTION**

*\*\*\*The last two categories are grouped together and provide information.*

**Signal Words:**

- DANGER –** Red background with contrasting color (normally white) signal word. Indicates severe injury or death.
- WARNING –** Orange background with black letter signal word. Indicates potential for severe injury or death.
- CAUTION –** Yellow background with black letter signal word. Indicates possible minor or moderate injury.
- NOTICE –** Blue background with contrasting color (normally white) signal word. Examples include: security, housekeeping (slippery when wet), check-in, etc.
- SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS –** Green background with contrasting color (normally white) signal word. Examples include: boiler shutdown procedures, equipment Lock Out/Tag Out procedures, etc.

**ANSI Z535 Sign Examples**



## References:

1. [http://www.clarionsafety.com/video-library?utm\\_source=WorkplaceSafety&utm\\_medium=ezone&utm\\_campaign=ANSI%20video#Drowning-Prevention](http://www.clarionsafety.com/video-library?utm_source=WorkplaceSafety&utm_medium=ezone&utm_campaign=ANSI%20video#Drowning-Prevention)
2. [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=FEDERAL\\_REGISTER&p\\_id=23993#iit=1422293737455&tmr=load%3D1422293736986%26core%3D1422293737272%26main%3D1422293737406%26ifr%3D1422293737456&cb=0&cdn=0&kw=workplace%20safety%20prevent%20injuries%20workplace%20health%20office%20safety%20office%20health%20factory%20safety%20osha%20training%20osha%20compliance%20osha%20safety%20osha%20law%20US%20Department%20of%20Labor%20safety%20in%20the%20workplace&ab=-&dh=www.osha.gov&dr=&du=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.osha.gov%2Fpls%2Foshaweb%2Fowadisp.show\\_document%3Fp\\_table%3DFEDERAL\\_REGISTER%26p\\_id%3D23993&dt=Updating%20OSHA%20Standards%20Based%20on%20National%20Consensus%20Standards%3B%20Signage%20-%2078%3A%2066642-66643&dbg=0&cap=tc%3D0%26ab%3D0&inst=1&jsl=33&prod=undefined&lng=en-us&ogt=&pc=men&pub=usdol&ssl=1&sid=54c67ae9497fa3ba&srpl=1&srcs=1&srd=1&srf=1&srx=1&ver=300&xck=0&xtr=0&og=&aa=0&csi=undefined&toLoJson=uv%3D54c67ae96a067aa400%26chr%3Diso-8859-1%26md%3D0%26vcl%3D0&rev=15.1&ct=1&xld=1&xd=1](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=FEDERAL_REGISTER&p_id=23993#iit=1422293737455&tmr=load%3D1422293736986%26core%3D1422293737272%26main%3D1422293737406%26ifr%3D1422293737456&cb=0&cdn=0&kw=workplace%20safety%20prevent%20injuries%20workplace%20health%20office%20safety%20office%20health%20factory%20safety%20osha%20training%20osha%20compliance%20osha%20safety%20osha%20law%20US%20Department%20of%20Labor%20safety%20in%20the%20workplace&ab=-&dh=www.osha.gov&dr=&du=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.osha.gov%2Fpls%2Foshaweb%2Fowadisp.show_document%3Fp_table%3DFEDERAL_REGISTER%26p_id%3D23993&dt=Updating%20OSHA%20Standards%20Based%20on%20National%20Consensus%20Standards%3B%20Signage%20-%2078%3A%2066642-66643&dbg=0&cap=tc%3D0%26ab%3D0&inst=1&jsl=33&prod=undefined&lng=en-us&ogt=&pc=men&pub=usdol&ssl=1&sid=54c67ae9497fa3ba&srpl=1&srcs=1&srd=1&srf=1&srx=1&ver=300&xck=0&xtr=0&og=&aa=0&csi=undefined&toLoJson=uv%3D54c67ae96a067aa400%26chr%3Diso-8859-1%26md%3D0%26vcl%3D0&rev=15.1&ct=1&xld=1&xd=1)
3. [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=standards&p\\_id=9794](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=standards&p_id=9794)
4. USF-OSHA Training Institute Publications, 29 CFR 1926 Construction Industry Standards, 1926.200 Subpart G – Signs, Signals, and Barricades, page 257.