

# Safety Sign Considerations in the Workplace

Safety signs convey and reinforce safety information in the workplace. They warn employees and visitors of potential hazards, communicate instructions, and highlight safety messages. This one pager explains safety signs and items to consider when choosing and posting signage in your workplace.

## ANATOMY OF A SAFETY SIGN

Safety signs have four (4) components to ensure employees, contractors, and visitors understand exactly what they need to do to protect themselves in the area near a safety sign. You want to make sure the safety signs you choose and post in your workplace convey the correct message. Some individuals may not speak English or it may be their first time to your site, so it is important your message contains the following criteria:



COLOR	SIGNAL WORD	INTENT
RED	DANGER	If not avoided, <b>WILL</b> result in <b>serious injury or death</b>
ORANGE	WARNING	If not avoided, <b>COULD</b> result in <b>serious injury or death</b>
YELLOW	CAUTION	If not avoided, <b>COULD</b> result in <b>minor or moderate injury</b>
GREEN	SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS	A non-hazard message providing <b>safety-related instructions or procedures</b> ; does not follow three-part safety message
BLUE	NOTICE	A non-hazard message addressing practices <b>not related to physical injury</b> ; does not follow three-part safety message



## DO'S AND DON'Ts FOR SAFETY SIGNS

Now that you understand the basics of safety signs, take a moment to consider the signs at your workspaces. Can you improve or update any to make them more effective? Here are some other considerations to help improve your signage!



### DON'T...

- Use safety signs by themselves
- Post signs on mobile or moveable objects
- Create a new hazard when you post a sign
- Use too much signage for a single area
- Use large or technical words



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### DO...

- Base signal words on hazard severity and likelihood
- Ensure wording is easy to read and concise
- Provide a catchy, positive, safety message, if possible
- Use signs durable enough to withstand the environment
- Choose colored signs over black and white
- Make sure signs convey the right message
- Make sure the safety message aligns with information from hazard analyses, personal protective equipment hazard assessments, industrial hygiene surveys, and safety data sheets
- Include safety signs as part of workplace inspections
- Incorporate safety signs into site-specific training
- Enforce posted signage
- Consider periodically switching out signage
- Post signage as close to the hazard as possible and at all access points, as applicable
- Ensure the sign is visible once posted
- Make sure signs cannot be easily taken down or fall off the wall
- Ensure people can read the signal word from a distance
- Consider posting bilingual signs for non-English speaking persons

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