

FACILITY SAFETY SIGNAGE GUIDE: 10 SIGNS TO SPOT DURING A PLANT WALKTHROUGH



[Safety signs](#) are the primary way to communicate important warnings and messages to your employees, on-site contractors and other visitors. Under OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard update, organizations can now use either the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) standards from 1967-1968 (ANSI Z53.1, Z35.1 & Z35.2) or from 2011 (ANSI Z535.1, Z535.2 & Z535.5) for safety signage.

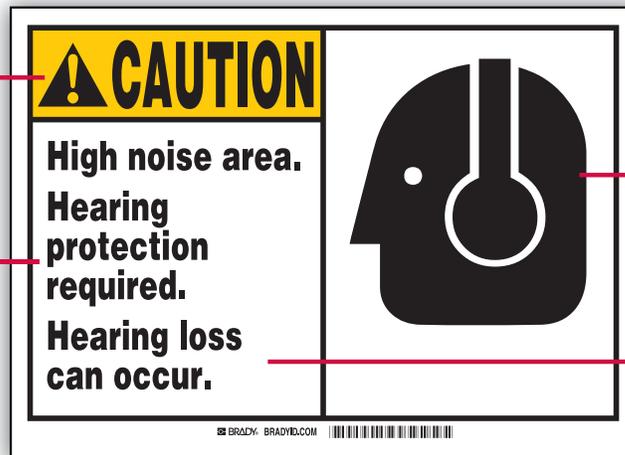


With OSHA referencing both ANSI standards, you have the option to comply with either the old or new safety sign specifications.

New format:

A safety alert symbol needed for Danger, Warning and Caution signs

Text is succinct, active tense, left justified and follows character case rules



Greater use of symbols and pictograms

Communicates hazard, consequence and avoidance statements

While you will not be fined if you don't update your signage to the new standard, there are benefits to it and the acceptance of the standard offers a good time to review your organization's visual workplace communications. A visual plant walkthrough is an effective way to make sure a facility has the right safety signs placed in all necessary locations. A good methodology to facilitate these walkthroughs is to reference this safety signage guide that has been developed from various safety policies and procedures.

Keep the following 10 types of signs in mind when you are conducting your walkthroughs. This guide will help ensure that your facility has the most relevant safety signs displayed in their proper locations, are meeting OSHA regulations and are clearly communicating the intended messages.



Exit/ Evacuation Signs

1. Exit/Evacuation Signs:

OSHA requires visible emergency response exit and evacuation routes. Any doorway or passage along egress routes that could be confused for an exit must indicate its actual use. Every authorized exit sign must be either constantly illuminated by a reliable light source, or be sufficiently self-luminating by use of photoluminescent (glow-in-the-dark) materials and be of distinctive color.

These signs should further be placed in every location where the direction of travel may not be obvious. Each sign must have the word “Exit” in plainly legible letters not less than six inches high or less than three-fourths of an inch wide.

Examples:

- **Exit Sign (text only):** leads employees to safety in case of an emergency.
- **Exit Sign (with arrow):** should be placed as guide to nearest exit location.



Fire Signs

2. Fire Signs:

OSHA requires signs that indicate the location of fire extinguishers and fire hose cabinets so they are readily accessible in case of an emergency. Walkthroughs can be used to ensure that all necessary signs are present and can be conspicuously identified.

Examples:

- **Fire Extinguisher:** identifies portable extinguishers.
- **Fire Alarm:** identifies areas where fire alarms are present.
- **Fire Evacuation:** guides individuals to use stairways or other routes during fire.



Electrical Arc Flash Hazard Signs

3. Electrical Arc Flash Hazard Signs:

OSHA requires signs that indicate high voltage areas in order to provide sufficient access and working space be maintained around energized electric equipment.

Examples:

- **Danger-High Voltage:** identifies high voltage areas.
- **Danger-Battery Charging Area:** identifies areas in which batteries are charging.

A newly revised NFPA standard, NFPA 70E-2012, mandates that arc flash labels be placed on all electrical equipment, including switchboards, panel boards, meter socket enclosures and motor control centers that would require maintenance while energized. These labels must contain:

- 1) Nominal System Voltage
- 2) Arc Flash Boundary
- 3) One of the following:
 - a. Available incident energy and corresponding working distance
 - b. Minimum arc rating of clothing
 - c. Required level of PPE



First Aid Signs



Flammable/Combustible Signs



Personal Protection Signs



Hazardous Areas Signs



Confined Spaces Signs

4. First Aid Signs:

OSHA requires that first aid supplies be identified and readily available at all times in case of a medical emergency.

Examples:

- **Eye Wash:** identifies areas that offer first aid solutions for instances when eyes may be contaminated by foreign materials or substances.
- **Safety Showers:** identifies areas that offer first aid solutions for instances when the body comes in contact with hazardous chemicals.
- **AED:** identifies the location of Automated External Defibrillator in case of an emergency situation.
- **First Aid Stations:** indicates stations that provide care or treatments before regular medical aid can be obtained.

5. Flammable/Combustible Signs:

OSHA requires conspicuous warning labels be placed on containers and areas that contain flammable or combustible liquids, vapors or materials.

Examples:

- **Danger-No Smoking, No Open Flames, No Sparks:** identifies areas where precautions should be taken against ignition of flammable vapors and hydrogen gas.
- **Flammable-Keep Fire Away:** identifies areas that could result in materials combusting due to flammable reaction.

6. Personal Protection Signs:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be provided and used when a hazard capable of causing injury or impairment through physical contact, absorption or inhalation. PPE signs, symbols and accident prevention tags serve as a reminder of the requirements.

Examples:

- **PPE Signs:** include reminders about appropriate and required eye protection, hearing protection, foot protection and head protections. These reminders include messages about wearing a hardhat, face shields, eye protection, respirators and more.

7. Hazardous Areas Signs:

OSHA requires “Caution” accident prevention signage to warn against potential hazards and unsafe practices. Hazardous signs instruct employees of area protocol.

Examples:

- **Biohazard Signs:** used to identify equipment, rooms and materials which contain, or are contaminated with, hazardous agents.
- **Caution or Danger-Hot:** helps identify areas with areas of extreme heat and danger.
- **Hazardous Waste Storage Signs:** identify areas that require caution due to the storage of hazardous waste.
- **Radiation Signs:** Each radiation area shall be conspicuously posted with a sign or signs bearing the radiation caution symbol and the words: “Caution Radiation Area.” The pictogram to be displayed is the conventional three-bladed design.

8. Confined Spaces Signs:

Warns employees of areas that require authorized permits or specific instructions for entering into a potentially hazardous confined space.

Examples:

- **Danger-Confined Space:** helps identify confined workspace areas. These confined space signs include warnings for authorized or permit entry areas. Confined space signs can also indicate specific instructions to employees for space entry.



Machine and Equipment Signs



Slips, Trips and Falls Signs

Need more help analyzing signs in your facility?

- **[Facility Signage Walkthrough](#)**
Plant walkthrough to identify facility labeling, identification and signage in one service
- **[Facility Safety Signage Audit Service](#)**
Ensures the accuracy and completeness of a facility's safety signage and pipe marking needs
- **[Facility Slips, Trips and Falls Audit Services](#)**
Full assessment of facility including itemized steps to minimize slips, trips and falls

Contact Brady's professional services team to learn more, visit: www.BradyID.com/Services

9. [Machines and Equipment Signs:](#)

Alerts of dangerous areas in operating areas and machine use in order to warn and protect employees from hazards that could cause personal injury or equipment failure.

Examples:

- **Operation Warnings:** includes warnings of automatic start-ups, emergency shut-downs and machine guard requirements.
- **Pinch Signs:** identifies areas that require hands to be clear of in-use equipment in order to avoid pinching, or worse.

10. [Slips, Trips and Falls Signs:](#)

Identifies areas where there is a general need for instructions and suggestions to maintain safety in aisles, passageways, stairways and balconies of a facility.

Examples:

- **Caution-Slippery Floor:** helps warn of areas where individuals could easily slip or fall due to slippery or wet surfaces.
- **Watch Your Step:** indicates areas that may have uneven or irregular floors.

Other facility areas where signage notifications are either required or commonly identified according to industry best practices include utility and production feed pipes, shock hazard locations, [lockout/tagout](#) and hazard communication signs.

Plant walkthroughs can help make sure that all areas in your facility have proper signage to communicate messages for emergency situations and to avoid accidents. Signs do not need to be placed directly on the hazard, rather, in adjacent locations that are most visible to those in proximity. This helps individuals identify key signal words (danger, caution, warning, notice and biological hazard) and corresponding safety symbols before they approach the hazardous area.

Utilizing a third party expert consultant, such as Brady, to conduct facility signage walkthroughs can result in the identification of additional safety signage and labeling needs that may not have been considered.

Brady has more than 22,000 stock signs available for safety, maintenance and facility identification. [Custom design tools](#) also allow users to create made-to-order OSHA and ANSI safety signs to meet their specific facility requirements. The made-to-order process is easy: select your category, customize the pictograms and text and then submit your signs to Brady.

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