

:: Safety Signs ::

Signs are all around us, whether it's in the workplace, on the road, at the store or at a sporting event. Some signs are directional in nature and tell us where to go while driving or walking. Others are used to indicate where we should exit an area, park or store certain items. Other signs are used to prevent mishaps and are quite common in the work place. But did you know that OSHA has certain requirements regarding signs? The requirements are in place to make sure hazard warnings are easy to recognize and don't vary from work place to work place.

OSHA defines signs as "the warnings of hazard, temporarily or permanently affixed or placed at locations where hazards exist." You will probably notice several different safety signs within the work place to include: danger, warning, caution, special and safety instruction. Take the time to look over the

following and become familiar with the different types and styles of signs, because they directly affect your safety.

Although signs are never a substitute for good safety procedures and training, they are useful to remind us of hazards within the work place and ways to protect ourselves against those hazards. Always take the information given on a sign seriously, whether that sign is in the workplace, on the road or within a stadium. Understanding signs and the hazards they warn us about can help prevent injuries and, more importantly, save lives.

Listed below are examples of the types of signs you may see that relate to safety. Become familiar with them so that you and others can be safe in the work place.



– DANGER –
Must only be used where an immediate hazard exists. They are usually red, black (or contrasting color) and white with room for words or symbols to describe the danger.



– WARNING –
Are orange and black (or contrasting color) lettering or symbols. They are used to warn against hazards which aren't quite as serious as those requiring a danger sign, but are more serious than those requiring a caution sign.



– CAUTION –
Must be used only to warn against potential hazards or to caution against unsafe work practices. They are predominately yellow with a black (or contrasting color) panel at the top of the sign and the word "caution" written in yellow on the panel.



– SPECIAL SIGNS –
Are used just for biological or radiological hazards. The biological hazard (biohazard) sign is fluorescent orange or orange-red with letters or symbols in a contrasting color. The biohazard sign alerts us to the presence, or potential presence, of blood or other biological hazards. Radiation hazards are identified with a sign bearing the familiar three-bladed radiation symbol in black or magenta or red on a yellow background.



– SAFETY INSTRUCTION SIGNS –
Are used to provide information about safety. They are not used to warn against specific hazards. These green and white signs remind employees to report accidents, help locate first-aid equipment and direct you along an evacuation route.