



SPECIAL POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Get the Message?
- Employee Awareness
- Effective Communication
- Sign Categories
- Signs and Color at Work
- Use Easy to Read and Understand Signs
- Safety Colors

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Hats ON for Safety

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Signs of Our Times

Get the Message? Safety Signs Say It All! Ideally your workplace is hazard-free and safe from potential injuries and accidents. But, there are many operations that will always involve certain amount of uncontrollable risk.

Because of these risks, safety signs need to be posted in dangerous areas. When you know the dangers, you can take actions to prevent a serious injury. So heed those warning signs. They are there for a reason—not just to decorate the walls.

Employee Awareness

OSHA has specific requirements focusing on signs and tags. They expect all employees to understand:

Categories—Shapes

Circle Regulatory: indicates that an order is in force. **Red and black on white Prohibition** forbids an action.



• Danger signs indicate immediate danger and special precautions are necessary.

• Caution signs indicate a possible hazard against which proper precaution should be taken.

When training employees about workplace hazards and safety precautions, be sure to use some actual signs that you display in your business and tell them the locations or departments where they will find these signs.

Effective Communication

In addition to sign color and shape coding, the symbols, pictorials, wording and their clarity contribute to a sign's meaning. The

use of simple words and graphics is essential to all sign viewers, and it is typically what you will find. If some of your employees don't speak English fluently, signs with graphic illustrations and multiple languages are effective methods for conveying the safety message.



Sign Categories:

As shown in the table below, there are three basic sign categories used in the workplace. Each category is distinguished by its shape.

indicates a definite hazard.

Square Information: Emergency White on **Green** indicates first aid, fire protection, etc. General information white on **blue**.



Mandatory: Requires an action—White on black.

Triangle Warning indicates caution or danger.

Black on yellow indicates a potential hazard. White on red



Safety Signs and Color at Work

Safety signs and color are useful tools to help protect the health and safety of employees and workplace visitors. Safety signs are used to:

- Draw attention to health and safety hazards
- Point out hazards that may not be obvious.
- Provide general information and directions.
- Remind employees where personal protective equipment must be worn.
- Show where emergency equipment is located.
- Indicate where certain actions are prohibited.

Color attracts attention and can be used extensively for safety purposes. For example, color can be used as an additional safety measure to identify the contents of pipes and the nature of the safety hazard. It also draws attention to the

Use Easy to Read Signs

Help employees and workplace visitors understand signs quickly by using clear language and symbols that can be learned and recognized easily.

- ▶ Keep symbols as simple as possible; eliminate details that don't make the message clearer.
- ▶ Avoid using signs that contain only text.
- ▶ A combination of text and symbols is generally the most effective.
- ▶ Consider multi-lingual signs if you have employees who do not speak English.

What are *YOU* worried about? Let us know safety topics that could help keep your workplace safe!

Safety Colors

• **RED** identifies **FIRE, DANGER** or **STOP**. It is most commonly used in



flammable liquid identification, emergency stop switches, and fire protection equipment. Danger indicates an immediately hazardous situation that could cause death or serious injury.

ORANGE specifies **WARNING**. Orange identifies hazardous equipment or situations. Common uses include marking machine hazards that pose cut, crush, or pinch



injuries, and for marking the insides of movable guards that allow access to gears, chains and the like...a potentially hazardous situation that could result in death of serious injury.

YELLOW indicates **CAUTION**. Used with black lettering, yellow identifies hazards



such as conditions toward flammable material storage. Caution indicates a potentially hazardous situation that may result in injury or death.

GREEN denotes **SAFETY**. Green identifies the locations



of safety equipment, material safety data sheets, etc.



BLUE indicates **NOTICE**. It is the color that identifies safety information signs such as personal protection.



Some information in this newsletter was taken from J.J.Keller.com and IAPA Safety Signs and Colour at Work.