



ANSI F.A.Q.

Frequently asked questions about ANSI compliance.

Almetek's E-Z ANSI Compliance Program provides our customers with a full ANSI review and evaluation service. Our dedicated ANSI staff will review your current signage and advise on any necessary upgrades to ensure compliance with ANSI Z535 standards. Learn more about ANSI Z535 by reading this F.A.Q. sheet.

What is ANSI?

ANSI stands for American National Standards Institute. The American National Standards Institute is a private, non-profit organization that oversees the development of voluntary consensus standards for products, services, processes, systems, and personnel in the United States. Though ANSI itself does not develop standards, the Institute oversees the development and use of standards by accrediting the procedures of standards developing organizations.

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) publishes the ANSI Z535 series of standards for safety signs and colors. Composed of six documents and a color chart, these standards depict and explain the unique properties that can alert people to hazards in the workplace and at home. These include ANSI compliant signs, labels, tags and other identification systems.

What are the new guidelines?

The original set of guidelines were published in 1967. The new, updated guidelines are in the 2011 edition. *Both ANSI 1967 and ANSI Z535 2011 formats are now OSHA compliant forms of safety and hazard communication.



ANSI Z535 1967

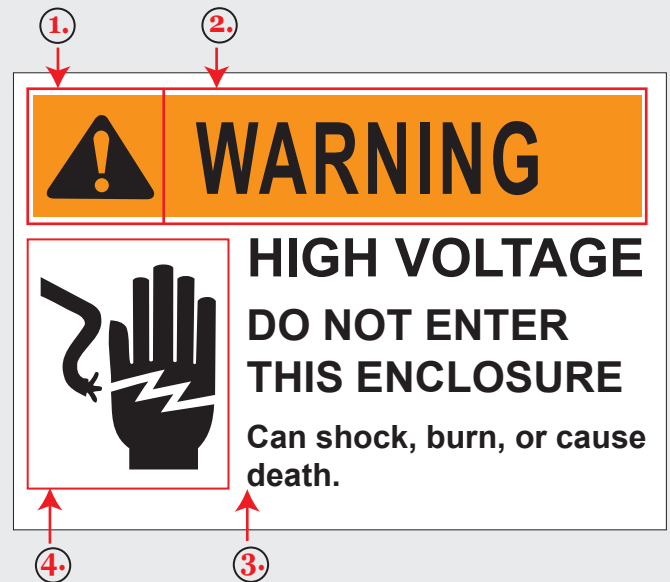


ANSI Z535 2011

Why update?

Benefits of ANSI Z535 2011:

- Provides a universal format.
- Consistency in layout.
- Added detail.
- More effective than previous format.
- OSHA recently adopted ANSI Z535 2011



What are the updated components?

Components to look for in a compliant label include:

1. Safety Alert Symbol
2. Signal Word Panel
3. Message panel
 - A. Hazard Avoidance
 - B. Hazard Identification
 - C. Hazard Consequence
4. Safety Symbol Panel

*See reverse side of page for additional information.



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What are the “Signal Words” and symbols?

The meaning of the different signal words as defined in this standard are explained below. Each signal word corresponds with a different level of hazardous situation or alert message. - (ANSI Z535.4-2011 A1.2)



DANGER indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, will result in death or serious injury.



WARNING indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury.



CAUTION indicates a hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in minor or moderate injury.



NOTICE is used to address practices not related to physical injury.



Safety instruction (or equivalent) signs indicate specific safety-related instructions or procedures

What are the components of a Message Panel?



Content (B3.1)

Should communicate information to a viewer on: the type of hazard, the consequence of not avoiding the hazard, and how to avoid the hazard.

Ordering (B3.2)

The order of the message panel is flexible. Generally, the hazard message will come first.

Formatting (B3.3)

Headline style, active voice, avoidance of the use of prepositional phrases, text justification, text case, type style, spacing, color, comprehension, and letter size are the formatting criteria taken into account when developing the message panel



ANSI Safety Symbol Guide



The function of a safety symbol is to communicate a particular safety message without the use of words. There are four types of safety symbols that communicate different messages.



Hazard Alerting

These symbols convey information related to the nature of the hazard.



Mandatory Action

This type of symbol conveys actions that should be taken to avoid hazards.



Prohibition

This type of symbol conveys actions that should not be taken.



Information

This type of safety symbol is generally used to convey:

- A. Safe condition (equipment location, egress, permitted actions).
- B. Fire safety (fire equipment location).

Three interrelated, yet distinct principles are critical for effectively conveying intended meanings of safety symbols:

Consistency

Refers to the relationship of one symbol to another. “A set of symbols within a system functions exponentially more effectively, because, as a visual consistent entity, the symbols build upon each other to form a coherent visual language.” (Olgyay, 1995; Annex C3, Reference 4).

Legibility

Refers to the relationship between a user’s visual capabilities and the symbol, or in other words, to the viewer’s ability to visually discriminate between key elements of a symbol. The goal is to quickly convey the information the symbol is supposed to communicate.

Comprehensibility

Refers to the user’s ability to understand/interpret a symbol’s meaning as the symbol designer intended.

Factors such as simplicity, representational symbols as opposed to abstract symbols, and depiction of the hazard or dramatic action are also preferred when designing an effective symbol.



Dramatic Action
More Effective



Abstract
Less Effective