

Regulatory Compliance

## OSHA Definitions of Safety Signs

Rob Marcantonio | Mar 01, 2017

**Your visual guide to OSHA's workplace safety signage regulations.**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) sets specific rules for workplace safety signage, with the mission of ensuring safe and healthful conditions for working men and women.

OSHA updated its signage regulations to incorporate more modern American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z535 standards in fall 2013, so if you haven't updated your company's signage, now is the time. Here's what you need to know.

# Compliant Signs Save Lives

Your visual guide to OSHA's workplace safety signage regulations.

## Color Guide

	<b>Caution</b> Cautions about potential hazards or unsafe practices
	<b>Danger</b> Conveys immediate danger: If not avoided, the hazard will cause serious injury or death
	<b>Biohazard</b> Alerts workers to infectious agents: If not avoided, these present a risk of illness, injury or death
	<b>Warning</b> Warns of potential danger: If not avoided, the hazard could cause serious injury or death
	<b>Safety Instructions</b> Provides general information such as procedures, instructions or suggestions related to safety measures

## Make Sure Every Sign...

Has rounded corners

Is hung safely and securely

Is prominently hung



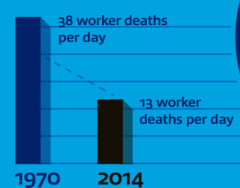
## How to Use Safety Tags

Something out of the ordinary?  
Temporary hazard?  
Tag it.

Safety tags should be used to alert workers to a temporary hazard or a hazardous operation for which there are no OSHA signs. Tags should remain up until the hazard is removed or the operation is completed. Smaller than safety signs, tags can be made of card stock, paper, pasteboard, plastic or another material and should be clearly visible.

## Closer to the Goal

Thankfully, U.S. worker deaths are in decline. A 66% decrease from 1970 to 2014 is thanks partially to OSHA.



# \$250 BILLION

Estimated cost of workplace injuries in 2007—more than the annual medical cost of treating cancer.

Sources: Standard 1910.145 OSHA; Milbank Quarterly; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

## Final Thought

Clear, consistent safety signs may help reduce the risk of injury to employees. Additionally, reducing workplace injuries could mean cost savings for employers. Make sure your safety signs are compliant.

Illustration by T.M. Detwiler

*What safety signs are you using in your worksite?*

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