

Information on ANSI Z535.2

The standard for environmental and facility safety signs is *ANSI Z535.2, American Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs*. "This standard covers requirements for environmental and facility safety signs that are used to visually alert and inform observers of potential hazards in the environment or facility."¹

This standard sets forth a hazard alert system that uses different signal words and colors to distinguish between levels of hazard severity (i.e. Danger, Warning, Caution, Notice) and standardizes sign layout through the use of signal word panels, message panels, and safety symbol panels.

Signal Word Panel

The signal word panel is the area at the top of the safety sign that contains the signal word or words (e.g. Danger, Warning, Caution, Notice). The signal panel also includes the triangular safety alert symbol when the hazard could result in personal injury (it is omitted if the hazard relates only to property). The following graphics show the difference between the old safety sign headers and the new signal word panel headers set forth in ANSI Z535.

Old Safety Sign Headers

The following safety sign headers have been superseded and are no longer current:



Current Signal Word Panel Sign Headers

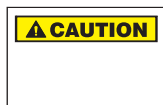
As set forth in Z535.2, each signal word panel header relates to a specific hazard level. Signal word panel graphics and hazards levels are as follows:



"**DANGER** indicates an imminently hazardous situation which, if not avoided, will result in death or serious injury."¹



"**WARNING** indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury."¹



"**CAUTION** indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, may result in minor or moderate injury."¹



"**CAUTION** used without the safety alert symbol indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, may result in property damage."¹



"**NOTICE** indicates information or a company policy that relates directly or indirectly to the safety of personnel or protection of property."¹

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Message Panel

The message panel "contains those words related to: identification of the hazard, how to avoid the hazard, and/or the probable consequences of not avoiding the hazard. When information on consequence, avoidance, or type of hazard is readily inferred, this information may be omitted from the message panel."¹

Often, the best (i.e. the most effective) safety sign incorporates a message panel that is specific to the situation and location. For example, an old safety sign that read "High Voltage" may now more appropriately read "Hazardous Voltage Above" or "Hazardous Voltage Inside, Keep Out." As a result, when it comes to ANSI Z535 safety signs, one sign definitely does not fit all situations. While Stranco maintains a catalog of ANSI Z535 safety signs, your best sign may be a custom sign. Contact Stranco Inc. customer service and begin the process of developing appropriate safety signs for your facility.

Safety Symbol Panel

The safety symbol panel contains the safety symbol (also referred to as a pictogram). The benefit of a well designed safety symbol is that it can communicate hazards quickly and across language and literacy barriers. ANSI Z535.3-2002 provides criteria for the design and use of safety symbols. While the use of a safety symbol is encouraged by ANSI Z535.2 when practical, it is an optional component of the multi-panel safety sign. Examples of safety symbols include:



While Stranco maintains an extensive catalog of safety symbols, a customized safety symbol for your situation may be needed. Accordingly, Stranco's design team is available to work with you to develop an appropriate safety symbol.

ANSI Z535.2 Safety Sign Layouts

A wide range of permissible safety sign layouts are established in ANSI Z535.2, including 2-panel, 3-panel, horizontal, vertical, multi-lingual, and multi-hazard layouts. While all permissible layouts are available from Stranco Inc., examples of the three most prevalent safety sign layouts are provided below.



For additional information on ANSI Z535 and to begin designing safety signs for your facility, contact Stranco, Inc. customer service.

¹ American National Standards Institute (ANSI). ANSI Z535.2 American Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs.