**ANSI Z535.4-2023**
(Revision of ANSI Z535.4-2011 (R2017))

# *American National Standard for Product Safety Signs and Labels*

Secretariat:

**National Electrical Manufacturers Association**

Approved December 14, 2023

**American National Standards Institute, Inc.**

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## Foreword

In 1979, the ANSI Z53 Committee on Safety Colors was combined with the ANSI Z35 Committee on Safety Signs to form the ANSI Z535 Committee on Safety Signs and Colors. This committee has the following scope:

To develop standards for the design, application, and use of signs, colors, and symbols intended to identify and warn against specific hazards and for other accident prevention purposes.

While the basic mission and fundamental purpose of the ANSI Z535 Committee is to develop, refine, and promote a single, uniform graphic system used for communicating safety and accident prevention information, the Z535 Committee recognizes that this information can also be effectively communicated using other graphic systems.

The Z535 Committee created subcommittees to update the Z53 and Z35 standards and to write new standards. To date, the following seven standards comprise the ANSI Z535 series:

| | |
|---|---|
| ANSI Z535.1 | *Safety Colors* [ANSI Z53.1-1979 was updated and combined into this standard in 1991] |
| ANSI Z535.2 | *Environmental and Facility Safety Signs* [ANSI Z35.1-1972 and Z35.4-1972 were updated and combined into this standard in 1991] |
| ANSI Z535.3 | *Criteria for Safety Symbols* [new in 1991] |
| ANSI Z535.4 | *Product Safety Signs and Labels* [new in 1991] |
| ANSI Z535.5 | *Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes (for Temporary Hazards)* [ANSI Z35.2-1974 was updated and combined into this standard in 1991] |
| ANSI Z535.6 | *Product Safety Information in Product Manuals, Instructions, and Other Collateral Materials* [new in 2006] |
| ANSI Z535.7 | Product Safety Information in Electronic Media [new in 2023] |

Together, these seven standards contain the information needed to specify formats, colors, and symbols for safety signs used in environmental and facility applications, in product and product literature applications, and in temporary safety tag and barricade tape applications.

Published separately is the ANSI Z535 *Safety Color Chart*. This chart gives the user a sample of each of the safety colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, grey, white, and black. It also describes each color's ink formulation and closest PANTONE® color.

This ANSI Z535.4 standard was prepared by Subcommittee Z535.4 on Product Safety Signs and Labels. The foreword and all of the annexes are considered to be informative and are not an official part of this standard. In the vocabulary of writing standards, the word “informative” is meant to convey that the information presented is for informational purposes only and is not considered to be mandatory in nature. The body of this standard is “normative,” meaning that this information is considered to be mandatory.

This standard provides guidelines for the design of safety signs and labels for application to products. The core guidelines contained in this standard were initially published in the first edition of this standard. This first edition became available in 1992. In the 1998 revision, Annex A was added to explain the use of safety label components in collateral material used with the product, and Annex B was added to provide helpful principles and guidelines for the design of product safety signs.

In the 2002 revision, Annex C was added to describe the use of ISO formats for product safety signs and labels and Annex D was added to provide translations for signal words.

In the 2007 revision, Annex E was added to assist in selecting a signal word, and Annex F was created to separate the normative references from the informative references.

The 2011 edition of this standard was revised to better harmonize with the ANSI Z535.2, Z535.5, and Z535.6 standards. A new type of product safety sign, the "safety instruction sign," was added to the

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standard joining the existing types of signs, hazard alerting signs, and safety notice signs which were also more clearly defined and named in this edition. In tandem with these changes, the definitions for “accident,” “harm,” and “incident” were refined to more clearly delineate a separation between physical injury and other safety-related issues (e.g., property damage).

Due to differences in color printing technologies and color monitors, the appearance of colors in this standard may not be accurate. See the ANSI Z535-2011 *Safety Color Chart* for the purpose of viewing accurate colors.

Proposals for improvement of this standard are welcome. Information concerning submittal of proposals to the Z535 Committee for consideration can be found at the back of this standard.

The 2011 version of this standard was reaffirmed in 2017.

The 2023 edition of this standard was revised to clarify the relationship of this standard and other applicable standards and regulations. As part of this clarification, additional text to explain the exceptions was added, which included a new definition for “Authority Having Jurisdiction”. In addition, text was added to allow safety messages to reference other safety signs or panels. Text was also added to clarify that safety signs can include additional graphic elements (other than safety symbols) to help clarify a safety message. The German translation of the signal word “NOTICE” in the informative Annex D was updated from “HINWEIS” to “ACHTUNG”. Finally, minor clarifications were made.

This standard was processed and approved for submittal to ANSI by the Accredited Standards Committee Z535 on Safety Signs and Colors. Committee approval of this standard does not necessarily imply that all committee members voted for its approval. At the time it approved this standard, the Z535 Committee had the following members:

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**Judith J. Isaacson**, Vice Chair
Paul Crampton, Secretary

| ***Organization Represented:*** | ***Name of Representative:*** |
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| American Society of Safety Professionals | J. Paul Frantz<br>Thomas F. Bresnahan (Alt.)<br>Timothy Rhoades (Alt.) |
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At the time it prepared this edition of ANSI Z535.4 for Z535 Committee vote, Subcommittee Z535.4 on Product Safety Signs and Labels had the following members:

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Paul Crampton, Secretary

| | |
|---|---|
| Rick Allen | International Staple, Nail & Tool Association |
| Gary Bell | Bell Product Safety |
| Eric Boelhouwer | Dorris and Associates International, LLC |
| Thomas Bresnahan | American Society of Safety Professionals |
| Steven Chybowski | Rockwell Automation |
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# 1 Introduction

This standard sets forth a system for presenting safety and accident prevention information through product safety signs and labels. It consolidates a number of previous graphic approaches into a common design direction selected to present product hazard information in an orderly and visually consistent manner.

The basic mission and fundamental purpose of the ANSI Z535 Committee is to develop, refine, and promote a single, uniform graphic system used for presenting safety and accident prevention information. Such an approach assists standard users in the efficient development of product safety signs and labels and assists sign viewers in recognizing signs as being related to safety.

This standard sets forth a hazard communication system that is designed to complement the ANSI Z535.2-2023, ANSI Z535.5-2022, and ANSI Z535.6-2023 standards. While these standards are similar in many respects, they each address different physical and visual requirements. As a result, the Accredited Standards Committee Z535 has recognized and affirmed the need for these separate standards.

# 2 Scope and Purpose

## 2.1 Scope

This standard sets forth requirements for the design, application, use, and placement of safety signs and labels on a wide variety of products.

## 2.2 Purpose

The purposes of this standard are to:

a. Establish a uniform and consistent visual layout for safety signs and labels applied to a wide variety of products,

b. Minimize the proliferation of designs for product safety signs and labels, and

c. Establish a national uniform system for signs that communicate safety information.

### 2.2.1 Existing Standards and Regulations

There are a number of existing standards that are recognized for particular industries or specific uses. Compliance with these standards may be considered for the particular industry or use. It is not the intent of ANSI Z535.4 to replace existing standards or regulations that are uniquely applicable to a specific industry or use. It is the intent to encourage adoption of this standard in subsequent revisions of other standards and regulations.

# 3 Application and Exceptions

## 3.1 Application

This standard provides guidance for manufacturers, employers, distributors, and others who have a desire to communicate safety information via product safety signs or labels.

### 3.1.1 ISO-Formatted Safety Signs

Product safety information may be conveyed by ISO formatted safety labels in compliance with ISO 3864-2 (see Annex C).

## 3.2 Exceptions

Requirements contained in federal, state, or municipal regulations, or applied by an Authority Having Jurisdiction, can supersede this standard. However, requirements in this standard may be considered when they do not conflict with those regulations or Authorities.

# 4 Definitions

**4.1 accident:** An incident that results in harm, property damage, or both.

**4.1.1 harm:** Any degree of physical injury, including death.

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