

ANSI Z535.5-2011 (R2017)

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American National  
Standard for Safety Tags  
and Barricade Tapes  
(for Temporary Hazards)





**ANSI Z535.5-2011(R2017)**  
Reaffirmation of  
ANSI Z535.5-2011

*American National Standard for  
Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes  
(for Temporary Hazards)*

Secretariat:

**National Electrical Manufacturers Association**

Approved October 25, 2017

**American National Standards Institute, Inc.**

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Published by

**National Electrical Manufacturers Association**  
**1300 North 17th Street, Suite 900**  
**Rosslyn, VA 22209**

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Printed in the United States of America

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## CONTENTS

Foreword .....	vii
1 Introduction .....	1
2 Scope and Purpose .....	1
2.1 Scope .....	1
2.2 Purpose .....	1
2.2.1 Existing American National Standards .....	1
3 Definitions .....	1
4 Safety tag and barricade tape classifications .....	3
4.1 DANGER .....	3
4.2 WARNING .....	3
4.3 CAUTION .....	3
4.4 NOTICE .....	3
4.5 SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS or similar words .....	3
5 Tag and Tape Format and Color Criteria .....	4
5.1 Standard Colors .....	4
5.2 Safety Alert Symbol .....	4
5.2.1 Color .....	4
5.2.2 Format .....	4
5.3 Signal Word Panels .....	4
5.3.1 DANGER tags and tapes .....	4
5.3.2 WARNING tags and tapes .....	4
5.3.3 CAUTION tags and tapes .....	5
5.3.4 NOTICE tags and tapes .....	5
5.3.5 SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS (or similar words) tags or panels .....	5
5.4 Tag and Tape Criteria .....	5
5.4.1 All Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes .....	5

5.4.2	A Single Tag or Length of Tape .....	6
5.4.3	Message Panel Color .....	6
5.4.4	Formats for Tag Borders .....	6
5.5	Tag and Tape Design/Layout .....	6
5.5.1	Safety Tag Layout .....	6
5.5.2	Barricade Tape Layout .....	7
6	Tag Location, Attachment Methods, Life Expectancy, and Authorization .....	8
6.1	Tag Location .....	8
6.2	Barricade Tape Placement .....	8
6.2.1	Placed to Alert and Inform the Viewer .....	8
6.2.2	Placed to be Legible, Non-Distracting, and Non-Hazardous .....	8
6.3	Safety Tag Attachment Methods .....	8
6.4	Life Expectancy .....	8
6.5	Safety Tag Authorization .....	8
7	Letter Style, Viewing Distance, Tag Size, and Shape .....	8
7.1	Letter Style .....	8
7.1.1	Signal Words .....	8
7.1.2	Message Panel Lettering .....	8
7.1.3	Examples of Acceptable Type Faces .....	9
7.1.4	Handwritten Tags .....	9
7.2	Letter Size .....	9
7.2.1	Letter Height for Barricade Tape .....	9
7.2.2	Viewing Distance / Letter Height for Tags .....	9
7.3	Tag Size and Shape .....	9
8	Safety Symbols .....	9
8.1	Conveyed Message .....	9
8.2	Use with and without Corresponding Word Messages .....	9
9	References .....	10

9.1 Normative References..... 10  
9.2 Informative References ..... 10

**Figures**

1 The Safety Alert Symbol ..... 3  
2 Format for the DANGER Signal Word Panel ..... 4  
3 Format for the WARNING Signal Word Panel ..... 4  
4 Format for the Personal Injury CAUTION Signal Word Panel ..... 5  
5 Format for the NOTICE Signal Word Panel ..... 5  
6 Format for the SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS or Similar Words Signal Word Panel ..... 5  
7 Formats for Tag Borders ..... 6  
8 Safety Tag Illustration ..... 7  
9 Barricade Tape Illustration ..... 7  
A1 Examples of Correct Signal Word and Safety Alert Symbol Placement ..... 11  
A2 Examples of Incorrect Signal Word and Safety Alert Symbol Placement ..... 11  
A3 Word Message with Hazard Description First ..... 12  
A4 Word Message with Hazard Avoidance Message First ..... 12  
A5 Headline Style Message ..... 13  
A6 Non-headline Style Message ..... 13  
A7 Examples of Action Statements ..... 13  
A8 Examples of Concise Hazard Description Statements ..... 13  
A9 Examples of Consequence Statements ..... 13  
A10 Examples of Correct and Incorrect Type Spacing ..... 14  
A11 Example of Personalized Lock Out Tag with Photo ..... 16  
A12 Example of Signature Block ..... 16  
A13 Example of Signature Block with Tag Line Completed ..... 16  
A14 Example of Step by Step Procedure ..... 16  
A15 Multi-Lingual Tag Layouts ..... 17  
A16 Multi-Lingual Tape Layouts ..... 17  
A17 Examples of Tag Backs ..... 17  
C1 Model of the Possible Results of a Hazardous Situation ..... 20  
C2 Signal Word Selection Process ..... 23

**Tables**

A1 Examples of Word Message Letter Heights and Minimum Safe Viewing Distances ..... 15

**Annexes**

A	Principles and Guidelines for the Design of Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes.....	11
B	Previous Formats for Signal Word Panels.....	18
C	Risk Estimation and Signal Word Selection.....	19
D	Informative References.....	24

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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. The Z535 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 Committees created subcommittees to update the Z53 and Z35 standards and to write new standards. To date, the following six 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]

Together, these six standards contain the information needed to specify formats, colors, and symbols for safety signs used in environmental and facility applications, product and product literature applications, and 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 MANTONE® color.

This ANSI Z535.5 standard was prepared by the Z535.5 Subcommittee on Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes (for Temporary Hazards). The foreword and all of the annexes are considered to be informative; the body is considered normative. In the vocabulary of writing standards, the word "informative" is meant to convey that the content presented is for informational purposes only and is not considered to be mandatory in nature. The word "normative" is meant to convey that the content is considered to be mandatory or prescriptive.

The first edition of this standard was made available to the public in 1992. Recognizing the differences between environmental and on-product safety signs, the standard focused on how to carry forward the requirements for hazard alerting stated in both the ANSI Z535.2 Standard and the ANSI Z535.4 Standard through the media of safety tags. In the 1998 and 2002 revisions notable changes included the format of signal word panels. The format of these panels is now uniform across the ANSI Z535.2, ANSI Z535.4, and ANSI Z535.5 Standards and most closely resembles the format originally used in ANSI Z535.4. In 2002, requirements and guidelines for the design of safety barricade tapes were introduced.

In the 2007 revision, Annex C was added to provide assistance in selecting a signal word, and Annex D 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, Z535.4 and Z535.6 standards. A new type of safety tag, the SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS tag, was added to the standard, in addition to the existing types of signs, hazard alerting tags and barricade tapes and safety

notice tags and barricade tapes, which were 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).

The 2011 edition of this standard was reaffirmed in 2017.

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

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:

**Geoffrey Peckham, Chair**

J. Paul Frantz, Vice Chair

Paul Orr, Secretary

*Organization Represented:*

*Name of Representative:*

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Thomas F. Bresnahan (Alt.)  
Timothy Rhoades (Alt.)

American Welding Society

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At the time it prepared this edition of ANSI Z535.5 for Z535 Committee vote, Subcommittee Z535.5 on Safety Tags and Barricade Tapes (for Temporary Hazards) had the following members:

**Nathan T. Dorris, Chair**

Paul Orr, Secretary

Lewis Barbe  
Nathan T. Dorris  
Eric Boelhouwer  
Steve Hall

World Safety Organization  
Dorris and Associates International, LLC  
Dorris and Associates International, LLC  
Applied Safety and Ergonomics

## 1 Introduction

This standard sets forth a system for presenting safety and accident prevention information through safety tags and barricade tapes. 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 with the efficient development of safety tags and barricade tapes, and assists safety tag and barricade tape viewers in recognizing signs as being related to safety.

This standard sets forth a hazard communication system that is designed to complement the ANSI Z535.2-2011(R2017), ANSI Z535.4-2011(R2017), and ANSI Z535.6-2011(R2017) 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, and use of safety tags and barricade tapes for temporary hazards. They shall be used only until the identified hazard is eliminated, or the hazardous operation is completed. For example, a safety tag would be appropriate for use during lock-out/tag-out procedures or on a damaged tool until it can be properly removed from the work area. Barricade tape would be suitable to mark an area affected by a chemical spill or an open and temporary trench.

Safety tags or barricade tapes shall not be used in place of a permanent sign or label intended for hazards in normal use, operation, or maintenance. However, if a permanent sign or label is presented in a tag configuration or a hang tag is used to supplement a permanent safety sign, the safety tag should comply with the provisions of ANSI Z535.2-2011(R2017) or ANSI Z535.4-2011(R2017).

While this standard addresses safety tags and barricade tapes for temporary hazards, other tags or tape types are not addressed by this standard. For example, underground tapes, permanent tapes, striped tapes, and non-skid tapes are not covered by this standard.

### 2.2 Purpose

The purpose of this standard is:

- a. to establish a uniform and consistent visual layout for safety tags and barricade tapes;
- b. to minimize the proliferation of designs for safety tags and barricade tapes; and
- c. to establish a national uniform system for safety tags and barricade tapes that communicate safety information.

#### 2.2.1 Existing American National Standards

There are a number of existing American National Standards which 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 this ANSI Z535.5 standard to replace existing standards or regulations, which 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 Definitions