



**PRESS RELEASE
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OSHA PUBLISHES DIRECT FINAL RULE ON STANDARDS UPDATE TO RULES ON SIGNAGE, AN ISSUE CHAMPIONED BY CLARION SAFETY SYSTEMS

Clarion CEO Geoffrey Peckham's Ongoing Leadership Efforts in Bolstering Adoption by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of the Updated American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) Standards Leads to Direct Final Rule on Consensus Standard Update on Signage, Marking Important Advancement in Workplace Safety

Milford, PA – June 14, 2013 – [Clarion Safety Systems](#), a longstanding leader in advancing best practices in visual safety communication, announced today that its efforts to promote the use of industry best practices related to safety signs, colors and tags to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has resulted in the agency issuing a Direct Final Rule (DFR) on a proposed update to its regulations on signage. If no significant adverse public comments on the DFR are received by July 15, 2013, the agency's next step will be to confirm the effective date of the rule.

Clarion's CEO, Geoffrey Peckham, who also serves as chair of the *ANSI Z535 Committee for Safety Signs and Colors* and chair and delegation head for ANSI to the ISO standards pertaining to [safety signs](#), has championed this update to OSHA's standards to better align with the latest advances in safety sign technology. Over the last four years, together with the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Peckham has lobbied OSHA to recognize that the American National Standards Institute's ANSI Z535 series of standards for safety colors, signs and tags provide an equal or greater level of safety as compared to the 1967-68 USASI Z53 and Z35 standards that are presently referenced in OSHA's regulations.

"At Clarion, workers' lives and livelihoods matter. In our view, OSHA's proposed update marks a significant step towards advancing workplace safety with effective signage," says Deb Patterson, President of Clarion Safety Systems. "Our comprehensive knowledge of the latest standards coupled with our practical experience applying them across industries brings our clients best practice products. We know that there's a better way to warn than what's present in most workplaces around the country. It's why we have been such strong advocates of OSHA's adoption of the ANSI Z535 standards; safety signage, when done well, reduces risk and protects people."

According to OSHA, the goal of the [safety sign rulemaking update](#) is to improve workplace safety and health by allowing employers to use the latest consensus safety sign standards (ANSI Z535) in order to

take advantage of the safety communication benefits that the newer standards represent. When compared to the older 1967-1968 standards, the ANSI Z535 standards are considered the state-of-the-art because they have the following characteristics:

- Provide critical information viewers need in order to make safe decisions, such as the nature of the hazard, the consequence of interaction with the hazard, and how to avoid the hazard
- Are supported by human factors research on effective warnings and by modern risk assessment methodologies for accurately communicating hazard severity
- Have the ability to use multiple language panels and graphical symbol panels to communicate safety to non-English speaking workers
- Meet current legal criteria for “adequate warnings” as defined by the past thirty years of U.S. case law

Most employers currently use signs that comply with the older 1967-1968 standards. Because OSHA aimed to avoid creating an economic burden to employers, the older 1967-1968 standards will continue to be referenced in OSHA’s regulations. However, the corresponding ANSI Z535-2011 reference will be placed next to the older reference. For instance, whenever the OSHA standards reference the 1968 *USASI Z35.1 Standard for Accident Prevention Signs*, the 2011 *ANSI Z535.2 Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs* will also be referenced. In effect, this will allow employers to use safety signs that comply with either the old or the new standards.

Prior to this rule change, employers using the newer ANSI Z535 standards for their signage would run the risk of being cited for violating OSHA standards. The outcome of this violation would not result in a fine due to the fact that the ANSI Z535 standards are the current version of the document that was used as the basis for OSHA’s safety sign regulations. Called a “de minimus situation,” this provision provides little incentive for employers to adopt the latest industry best practices with regards to safety signs, colors and tags. The new rule that incorporates ANSI Z535 safety sign, color and tag references into OSHA standards eliminates this problem, allowing employers to use the ANSI Z535 standards without the possibility of a citation.

“OSHA’s commitment to uphold the advances that have taken place in safety sign technology is a step forward in improving safety, reducing compliance uncertainty, and better protecting workers of all backgrounds,” says Peckham. “This is an opportunity for organizations to elevate visual safety communication in their workplaces. Safety and risk-conscious companies understand that, when it comes to zero harm and accident prevention, your workers, your company and your industry will be best served by utilizing the advances in warnings technology established in the ANSI Z535 standards. Industry leaders who already have a strong culture can now utilize signage that reflects their values in their facilities – *and* be in compliance with OSHA.”

To help safety advocates to learn more about the ANSI standards, as part of its comprehensive library of short, educational videos designed to promote a better understanding of current best practices in product safety labeling and facility sign systems, Clarion has produced a video titled, “*ANSI Standards*

in Safety Signs and Labels.” The video is available through the Clarion website’s [video library](#) as well as through the company’s [YouTube channel](#).

Clarion specializes in bringing companies up-to-date with the latest warnings technology and produces a product line of best practice, standards-compliant facility safety sign systems. Additional information is available by contacting the company or visiting www.clarionsafety.com.

ABOUT CLARION SAFETY SYSTEMS

Clarion Safety Systems, LLC, is the leading designer and manufacturer of visual safety solutions that help customers in more than 180 industries worldwide to make their products and premises safer. Clarion offers a full range of standard and custom products including machinery safety labels, environmental and facility safety signs, pipe and valve identification markings, lockout/tagout products, and safety-grade photoluminescent egress path-marking escape systems. Founded in 1990, the company continues to play a leading role in the development and writing of international and national standards for safety signs, labels, and markings. Clarion is headquartered at 190 Old Milford Road in Milford, PA, 18337, and online at www.clarionsafety.com.

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