



**PRESS RELEASE
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**ProMat Manufacturers Embrace 2011 Changes for ANSI Z535 Standards with
Clarion Product Safety Labels**

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z535 standards are a family of six consensus standards that define best practices in the United States for safety colors, signs, labels, symbols, tags and how safety information is presented in product manuals. The changes occurring in the newly revised Z535 standards (due out in early summer 2011) will play a pivotal role in redefining the look and content of product safety labels placed on large manufacturing equipment in nearly all industries, from material handling and packaging equipment to food processing and semiconductor manufacturing machinery. Clarion Safety Systems President Geoffrey Peckham has been a member of the ANSI Z535 committee since 1992, is chairperson for the *ANSI Z535.2 Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs*, and has significantly contributed to defining the new safety label standards used by industry to improve safety and reduce accidents.

Milford, PA – April 28, 2011 – [Clarion Safety Systems](#) President Geoffrey Peckham is often considered the most highly regarded thought leader for safety label design in the United States. Peckham has been a pivotal member of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z535 committee since 1992 and is chairperson for the *ANSI Z535.2 Standard for Environmental and Facility Safety Signs* and chair of ANSI's U.S. technical advisory group (TAG) to the parallel ISO standards committee for safety signs and product safety labels (ISO/TC 145). Peckham played a key role in bringing harmonization between the ANSI and ISO product safety labeling standards – helping U.S. machinery manufacturers to now sell products globally. It was no surprise, therefore, to see that much of the large machinery at the ProMat 2011 Exhibition featured Clarion safety labels in compliance with the new ANSI Z535 standards.

The ANSI Z535 standards are developed in strict accordance with the [American National Standards Institute](#) rules on committee structure and consensus standards-writing procedures. As such, the Z535 standards go through a revision or reaffirmation process every five years. The revision process provides the ability for people from all walks of life to have direct input into how and where these standards need to change in order to stay current with today's best practice warnings technology. Many of the changes being enacted in 2011 were proposed by Clarion.

The change that will have the broadest reach is actually what appears to be the simplest. In the 2011 revision, the definition for "accident", "harm" and "incident" have been changed to better reflect the purpose, scope and intent of the standards. The overall goal of the ANSI Z535 committee has never changed, and that is to provide the United States with a clearly written set of standards for a national uniform visual system for communicating safety information. What has not always been clear is that the ANSI Z535 standards are primarily concerned with communicating safety information that keeps people from being injured or killed (as opposed to protecting property).

Says Peckham, "The new definitions in the ANSI Z535 standards lay the groundwork for a clear distinction between how you warn about hazards that could injure or kill people and how you warn about things that could result in non-personal injury, such as equipment damage."

In addition to signage changes that provide clarity for different levels of risk, the 2011 ANSI Z535.4 standard for product safety labeling includes a whole new category of safety label – the SAFETY INSTRUCTION label. Knowing how and when to use this new category of labeling to communicate safety-related instructional messages will be critical for manufacturers seeking to improve safety and reduce liability exposure.



Also significant in the 2011 Z535 standards are the more clearly delineated role of safety symbols, and a symbol design methodology that increasingly aligns itself with ISO. Such clarifications are important to machinery manufacturers where their exported products must communicate safety messages to global audiences by utilizing an internationally accepted vocabulary of graphical symbols.

Clarion's safety label design staff has worked extensively with manufacturers in the material handling and logistics industry, focusing on better reducing risk and protecting people in environments where speed, precision and automation rule the day. Although automation may mean fewer potential accidents because fewer people physically interact with machinery, it can also mean more complicated safety labels since machines start and stop automatically and yet still need to be maintained. Often this high-speed equipment is large and requires several safety labels to indicate a variety of specific hazards, each placed at the point of possible human interaction with the hazard. Clarion's labels for these applications not only identify the hazards but often spell out specific hazard avoidance procedures, including proper installation criteria and maintenance steps involving lockout/tagout. The new ANSI Z535-2011 labeling standards are today's best practices as defined by industry, and manufacturers' diligence in adopting these best practices can help prevent accidents and costly product liability litigation based on "inadequate warnings."

Equipment manufacturers, such as those recently on display at the popular [ProMat Expo](#), are very interested in what revisions to the ANSI Z535 standards mean with regard to existing labels and the potential for risk reduction.

Clarion President Geoffrey Peckham commented, "The changes found in the 2011 ANSI Z535 standards are an important step towards helping to ensure the safety of workers who install, use, service and inspect manufacturing machinery. Since the ANSI Z535 standards are recognized by U.S. courts as the 'state of the art' for product safety labeling, awareness of the latest changes to these standards is critical to making the right updates to existing labels so that safety is improved and the machinery manufacturer's liability exposure is minimized."

To receive an audit of your existing safety labels, or to learn more about the new ANSI Z535 revision and its impact on safety labels, contact Clarion toll free at 800-748-0244.

About Clarion Safety Systems

For over 20 years, Clarion Safety Systems has been the premier company in its field, supplying over 180 industries with the product safety labels and facility safety signs needed to reduce risk and protect people. Clarion's new ANSI/ISO safety signs and labels are continually updated to comply with the latest standards. For more information visit: www.clarionsafety.com

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