

Author:	Paul Roberts	Revision #:	2
Approved By:	Chris Peoples	Date Revised:	January 2023

**SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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# **Accident Prevention Signs and Tags      SPP# 1910.145**

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## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this safety policy and procedure is to establish a method for marking physical hazards.

## 2.0 Scope and Applicability

Color coding is a standard way of quickly transmitting information. North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has adopted color codes based on OSHA and ANSI standards to convey safety information.

This safety policy and procedure provides a listing of color codes adopted by NCDOT and guidelines for accident prevention signs and tags specifications. It includes provisions for training and discussion on the design and messages contained on these accident prevention signs and tags.

This document also details the areas of responsibility for managers/unit heads, supervisors, employees, Safety and Loss Control, and Central Equipment Unit within NCDOT.

This safety policy and procedure affects all NCDOT employees.

## 3.0 Reference

This safety policy and procedure is established in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry (29 CFR 1910.145) and Occupational Safety and Health Standards for Construction Industry (29 CFR 1926.200).

## 4.0 Policy

It is the policy of NCDOT to provide a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that cause or are likely to cause death and serious physical harm to employees or the public. Therefore, accident prevention signs and tags will be used to establish uniformity and promote a safe working environment throughout NCDOT. When hazards exist that cannot be eliminated, then engineering practices, administrative practices, safe work practices, and proper training regarding Accident Prevention Signs and Tags will be implemented. These measures will be implemented to minimize those hazards to ensure the safety of employees and the public.

## 5.0 General Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each manager/unit head, supervisor, and employee to ensure implementation of NCDOT's policy on Accident Prevention Signs and Tags. It is also the responsibility of each NCDOT employee to report immediately any unsafe act or condition that is not safety color marked to his or her supervisor. Specific responsibilities are found in Section 6.3.

## 6.0 Procedure

This section provides applicable definitions, establishes general provisions, and identifies specific responsibilities required by NCDOT's safety policy and procedure on Accident Prevention Signs and Tags.

### 6.1 Definitions

#### Major Message

The portion of a sign or tag that indicates the specific hazardous condition or instructions for the exposed person.

#### Sign

A surface prepared for warning or providing safety instructions for workers and the public that may be exposed to hazards. This category does not include highway signs or safety posters used for employee education.

#### Signal Word

The word(s) printed on a sign or tag intended to capture a person's immediate attention.

#### Tag

A device made of paper, pasteboard, plastic or other material used to identify a hazardous condition.

### 6.2 General Provisions

This section details the provisions of this safety policy and procedure with each provision discussed in a separate subsection. These provisions are:

- Color Codes
- Accident Prevention Signs
- Accident Prevention Tags

#### 6.2.1 Color Codes

The following color codes are adopted by NCDOT:

- **Red** is recommended for identifying fire protection equipment, danger, and emergency stops on machines.
- **Yellow** because of its high visibility is the standard color for marking hazards that may result in accidents from slipping, falling, striking against, etc.
- **Green** in combination with white, such as the green cross on a white background, designates the location of first aid and safety equipment.
- **Black and White** and combinations of the two in strips or checks are used for housekeeping and traffic markings.
- **Orange** is the standard color to highlight hazardous parts of machines or electrical equipment, such as exposed edges of cutting devices, the inside of removed guards, and the doors and covers of switch boxes. Also, orange is used for biological and similar types of hazards.
- **Reddish-Purple (magenta)** identifies radiation hazards, such as radioactive materials in rooms and containers.

## 6.2.2 Accident Prevention Signs

Accident prevention signs are not considered the final step to be taken against hazards. Whenever possible, the hazards are to be eliminated.

The designs of accident prevention signs will be uniform throughout NCDOT. These signs must be visible at all times when work is being performed. The messages on these signs will be removed or covered when the hazard no longer exists.

Each accident prevention sign will include a major message that indicates the risk level of the hazard present. The following accident prevention signs are recommended for NCDOT use:

- **Danger signs** will be red, black and white. They will be used when an immediate danger exists and that special precautions are necessary. These signs will be conspicuously posted.
- **Caution signs** have a black upper panel and yellow letters. The lower panel will have a yellow background and black letters. These signs will be used to warn of possible hazards or to caution against unsafe practices.
- **Safety Instruction signs** will be white with a green upper panel and white letters. Any additional wording on the sign will be black letters on a white background. These signs will be used where general instructions or guidelines for safety are required such as *Fasten Seat Belts*, *Look Before Backing*, etc.
- **Slow Moving Vehicle Emblems** will be a fluorescent yellow-orange triangle with a dark red reflective border. These signs will be used on any vehicle or equipment traveling at a speed of 25 miles per hour or less.
- **Biological Hazard signs** will be florescent orange-red with lettering or symbols in a contrasting color. These signs will be used to inform employees of the actual or possible presence of biological hazards.
- **Radiation Hazard signs** will contain the conventional radiation caution colors (magenta or purple on yellow background) and the standard radiation symbol.
- **Directional signs**, other than automotive traffic signs, must be white with a black panel and white directional symbol. Any additional wording on the sign shall be black letters on the white background.
- **Exit signs** when required must be lettered in legible red letters not less than 6 inches high on a white field and the principal stroke of the letters must be at least three-fourths of an inch wide.
- **Traffic signs** shall be posted in construction areas with legible traffic signs at points of hazard. All traffic control signs or devices used for protection of State employees and the public shall conform to the latest version of the manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

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For asbestos areas, warning signs are to be affixed for regulated areas must read:

**DANGER  
ASBESTOS  
MAY CAUSE CANCER  
CAUSES DAMAGE TO LUNGS  
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY**

Appendix A presents examples of accident prevention signs.

## **6.2.3 Accident Prevention Tags**

Accident prevention tags are a temporary method of warning of a hazardous condition, defective equipment, radiation hazards, etc. However, accident prevention tags will not be used as a substitute for accident prevention signs. The designs of accident prevention tags will be the same as accident prevention signs. The messages on these tags will be removed or covered when the hazard no longer exists.

Accident prevention tags will contain a signal word or emblem (such as Danger, Caution, or Biohazard) and a major message. The signal word will be readable from a distance of at least five feet and will be understandable to all employees. The major message shall be presented in either pictographs, written text or both and will indicate the particular hazard involved or instructions to the exposed person. Accident prevention tags will be located and secured as close as possible to the hazard.

## **6.3 Specific Responsibilities**

### **6.3.1 Managers/Unit Heads**

Managers/Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that adequate funds are available and budgeted for the purchase of accident prevention signs and tags in their areas.

Managers/Unit Heads will also ensure compliance with accident prevention sign and tag specifications through their auditing process.

### **6.3.2 Supervisors**

Supervisors should obtain necessary accident prevention signs and tags from State contract vendor or local suppliers.

Supervisors will ensure that areas needing accident prevention signs and tags are so marked.

Supervisors shall replace faded or damaged accident prevention signs and tags as necessary.

### **6.3.3 Employees**

Employees shall comply with the warnings and instructions given on accident prevention signs and tags. Employees will immediately notify their supervisors about those work areas requiring accident prevention signs and tags or if existing signs and tags are faded or damaged needing replacement.

### **6.3.4 Safety and Risk Management**

Safety and Risk Management will provide prompt assistance to managers/unit heads, supervisors, or others as necessary on any matter concerning accident prevention signs and tags. Safety and Risk Management will assist in developing or securing the required training. Safety and Risk Management will work with Purchasing and Central Equipment Unit to ensure that all newly purchased accident prevention signs and tags comply with this safety policy and procedure.

Additionally, Safety Engineers will provide consultative and audit assistance to ensure effective implementation of this safety policy and procedure.

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## APPENDIX A: Accident Prevention Signs Examples

### Danger Sign Examples



### Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem



### Caution Signs Examples



### Safe Instructional Signs Examples



### Biological Hazard Signs



### Radiation Hazard Signs



### Accident Prevention Tags

