

No BS Fact Sheet No. 11



What's Your Sign?

Signs must be used, where necessary, to help people identify escape routes, find fire fighting equipment and emergency fire telephones. These signs are required under the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 and must comply with the provisions of those Regulations.

Emergency Exit Signs

For a sign to comply with these Regulations, it must be in pictogram form (see Figure 1.). The pictogram can be supplemented by text if this is considered necessary to make the sign more easily understood, but you must not have a safety sign that uses only text.



Figure 1. Typical fire exit sign

Where the locations of escape routes and fire fighting equipment are readily apparent and the fire fighting equipment is visible at all times, then signs are not necessary. In all other situations, it is likely that the fire risk assessment will indicate that signs will be necessary.

Action in the Event of a Fire Sign

Fire safety instruction notices should remain simple and include a concise, step-by-step set of instructions for occupants to follow in the event of fire. These notices play an important role in complementing formal training in fire safety and act as a reminder of what to do in the event of a fire. Fire safety instruction notices should include, as a minimum, the following steps: raise the alarm; evacuate; proceed to the assembly point.



Figure 2. Fire Action Notice

Signs showing emergency and evacuation plans and places of assembly

Evacuation plan signs normally provide more detailed information than standard fire escape routes visually. Evacuation plans are an integral part of fire safety management, and instruction signs may be displayed to reinforce staff training about actions to be followed. It is recommended that such signs give clear indication of the nearest exit.

Mandatory and maintenance instruction

Escape routes must be kept clear of obstruction at all material times, both inside the building and immediately outside the exit. The integrity of the means of escape is totally dependent on the effectiveness of fire barriers and passive fire protection. It is essential that all equipment, such as automatic fire doors, is kept clear and operational.

“Mandatory” and “maintenance” fire safety instruction notices are required to complement formal training and instruction in this matter, in order to help prevent the spread of fire from one part of the building to another.

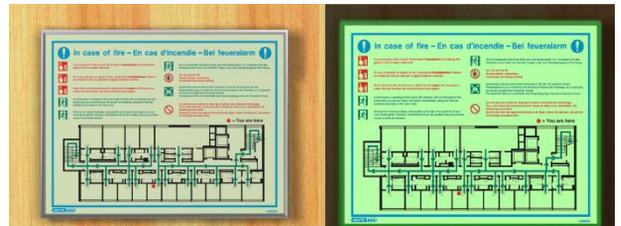


Figure 3 Emergency and evacuation plan

Fire alarm and firefighting equipment signs

These are fire safety signs that are required to locate and identify first aid firefighting equipment, and fire alarms.

Legislation requires that, as appropriate, building occupants receive adequate training to locate, identify and, if necessary, operate the appropriate first aid firefighting equipment, including fire alarms. The Fire Safety Order states that: “Where necessary...any non-automatic firefighting equipment so provided is easily accessible, simple to use and indicated by fire signs”.

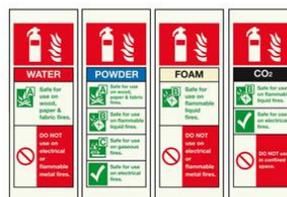


Figure 5. Fire alarm and fire fighting equipment sign