



TOOL BOX 061-SIGNAGE INSTALLATION

South African regulations made under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993* as well as by-laws made under the *Fire Brigade Services Act, 1987* require employers to provide and maintain safety signs where there is significant risk to health and safety. All workplaces, and public places are covered. Crucial in any work environment, the purpose is to prevent injury and ensure staff and visitors are well aware of the possible dangers and hazards ahead in certain situations and/or environments.

Referrals: Documentation SANS10400T, SANS10105, SANS1186, and your local By-Laws

Positioning

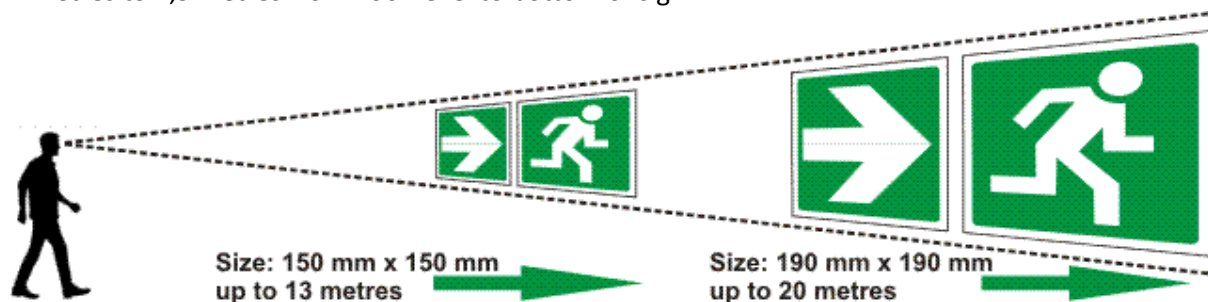
The rule of thumb concerning signage to check if there is adequate to guide to fire protection equipment or escape routes is:

You should stand anywhere in the protected area, and without moving more than one or two paces, be-able to locate fire equipment / exit or signage leading to such equipment or exit door.

Signs are, in principle, to be installed at a suitable height and in a position appropriate to the line of sight, taking account of any obstacles, either at the access point to an area in the case of a general hazard, or in the immediate vicinity of a specific hazard or object and in a well-lit and easily accessible and visible location

Recommended height for installation:

2 metres to 2,5 metres from floor level to bottom of sign.



Do not position too many signs in one place

Take care to avoid using too many signboards in close proximity. Signs are only effective if they can be seen and understood. If too many signs are placed together there is a danger of confusion or of important information being overlooked.

Do not position too high or too low

A natural process in an emergency where human behaviour is concerned. No matter how calm you may consider yourself, anxiety increases where the will to survive is concerned, and that is putting it mildly.

No matter whether you are running or walking the natural gaze is forward and down. Understandable as you do not want to bump into anything or trip over anything. So the ideal position for a sign should be sited conspicuously within the normal field of vision.

If signage is mounted too high it will most like be missed by the evacuee, and as the smoke rises the sign will be-come less visible.

To assist evacuees with the prediction of the location of successive signs, the following principles should be applied:

This mounting height is intended to ensure that signs can be readily seen, e.g. over the heads of people.

Mounting height is intended to ensure the signs are within the immediate field of vision and therefore larger signs might be necessary.

Try if possible be consistent where possible, signs should be sited at the same height throughout the escape route.

Supplementary arrow signs

Often, signs are combined, for example:

- a red fire equipment location arrow used in conjunction with a red sign indicating the type of equipment (eg a fire extinguisher, fire hose or Hydrant).Or combination there of
- a white on green general direction "this way" arrow used with a white on green running man sign indicating the whereabouts of exits.

Emergency exits

People usually leave premises by the same way that they enter or by routes which are familiar to them. Alternative exits (ie all emergency exits and any exits not in normal use) should be clearly indicated so that people know there are additional ways to leave. In addition, the provision of well-signposted exits in full view will give a feeling of security in an emergency.

Make sure the fire exit sign is displayed immediately above the exit opening or, if this is not possible, choose a position where the sign can be clearly seen and is least likely to be obstructed or obscured by smoke.

Where an exit cannot be seen or where a person escaping may be in doubt about the location of an exit (eg in warehouses where goods for transit and other obstructions may prevent a clear view of the exit doors), fire exit signs, including a directional arrow, are appropriate at suitable points along the escape route.

Your municipal fire service may, in addition to the standard fire safety signs, require provision of certain supplementary signs to aid the effective and efficient use of the escape routes provided. For instance, where there is a danger that a door which is a fire exit may become obstructed (because its importance is not appreciated) such as a final exit door opening into a car park or storage yard, or a seldom used intercommunicating or bypass door between rooms, a conspicuous '**Fire Escape – Keep Clear**' sign should be shown on the appropriate faces of the door. Check with your local authority if you have any doubts.

Escape Route Signage - The Golden Rules

Escape route must be obvious

At least one possible route or doorway leading to an escape route should be visible from any place within every room or enclosure. Where the route is not obvious or confusion could occur, the route should be indicated by a sign. Running men and arrows.

Persons escaping along any designated escape route should always have an escape route sign in sight whenever a door or choice of direction has to be made.

If a doorway or sign is obscured, a second sign should be added. In some cases it may be appropriate to use a suspended sign.

All changes of directions in corridors, stairways and open spaces should be clearly marked with intermediate signs. Each door or junction should be similarly marked.

Final Exit signs – the ones leading directly to a place of safety - should **not have an arrow** on them.

When is a Fire Exit an exit?

An Exit is a doorway or other suitable opening that leads directly to any place of safety. However, **Fire Exit** and **Exit for emergency use only** signs should only be positioned by exits that are provided specifically as an alternative means of escape in the event of an evacuation

Where possible, signs should be sited at the same height throughout the escape route.

Approvals

If installing signage to a new building stick to the approved plans as supplied – If you feel there is a lack of signage report it. Do not take it on yourself to perform additions, and do not ignore the approved plans at all.

Who is responsible for the signage requirements?

It is not you. It the building owner or person designated by them in writing. You have been designated as the installer, and once completed your responsibility is over. The responsible

person concerned with the protected area will still have to ensure that it matches the requirements by law as you are not fully aware of their policies, and procedures.

Presented By: Name: _____	Date _____	Signature _____
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