

I Saw the Sign

By Mark Berger

The computer revolution has led to many changes in our society. One of my favorites has been the proliferation of well-designed signs. Almost anyone with access to a printer can craft an important message and display it neatly.

Sometimes these signs are effective, illuminating, well-written and expertly executed. Other times they lead to head-scratching and shouts of “What were they thinking?”

Here are a few examples of both. Sometimes signage aids in ensuring clear paths in the means of egress. Other times they illustrate how far we still have to go to educate the public about life safety codes.



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1. Good “Do Not Block” Sign

I have included multiple pictures in the past with shopping carts, bicycles and other items blocking exit doors. Sometimes there were signs, other times not. This great sign not only has simple words explaining what should be done, the illustration adds easy understanding of the importance of keeping exits clear.



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2. High Voltage

In the old days, just saying there was up to 460 volts would have been enough to tell anyone to keep out of this space. Now we add multiple disclaimers and a warning as to what could happen if you open the door. The “Do Not Block” sign seems like a quaint afterthought.

3. Polite Sign

We all love it when people say “please” and “thank you.”

4. I Repeat

Looks like someone entered “2” in the quantity field when they printed their “Do Not Open The Door” sign. I’ll certainly take a meaningless sign over illegal slide bolts on a door any day of the week, but I’d much prefer removing the obstacles from in front of the door.



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Have pictures you’d like to share? Email your high-resolution pictures (300 dpi or higher) to Denise Gable at dgable@dhi.org, or mail them to Denise Gable, DHI, 14150 Newbrook Dr., Suite 200, Chantilly, VA 20151. Be sure to include your name, descriptions of what the photos show, and where you were when you took them!

5. Nice Door Alarm Signage

These guys thought of everything. What attention to detail. Look at the sign leading to the fire extinguisher. Well done!



6. Ornamental Door

This one is a bit overdone. Notice the intercom next to the door. Where are you supposed to go while waiting to get buzzed in?



7. Stop and Smell the Coffee

This is the equivalent of the cheeky airline attendant with her cute and amusing safety announcement. This totally legal exit also doubles as a billboard. But it is also brutally honest. Read all the writing on the door on the right.



8. Uh Oh

Stating the obvious. The padlocked slide bolt really brings home the sign's statement that "This Door is Closed." But instead of putting up signs, let's remove the slide bolts and restore the exit to full functionality.



The images shown here are not intended to reflect upon any specific manufacturer or products, but are intended to help build awareness around the everyday code violations that occur in buildings over time, despite our members' best efforts to provide solutions to secure the life safety and security of the building occupants.