

Five Steps to Improve Your Safety Decal Management Program

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GM Nameplate

Step 1

Compliance Review

The first and most important step in evaluating your safety and warning communications is understanding the appropriate standards. A failure-to-warn lawsuit can cost a manufacturer millions and it can have more than financial repercussions; it can impact a company's reputation and cripple operations for years to come. Prevention a critical way to avoid risk and ensure sound business practice.

Identify Needs

What are the standards pertaining to each product manufactured? Compare the safety decal samples to the drawings to ensure the material and adhesive match.

Define Message

Take a step back and evaluate the message for each decal from the user's perspective. What is the specific hazard and avoidance? How much space do you have for the warning/safety decal? Where is the most appropriate place for the decal? Your safety decal review should include:

- Wording: Can the safety message be more concise?
- Pictorials: Is the right hazard pictorial being used? Can an avoidance pictorial be added?
- Signal Words: Does the signal word match the hazard?
- Consistency: Do the decal layouts look the same across all products?
- Coloring: Are the correct ANSI colors being used?
- Placement: Are the decals correctly placed?

Notes

Consider the market

If the product is exported, does it meet CE standards? Are the decals formatted to ISO-specifications? Are the safety pictorials the same as the ANSI version?

Depth of expertise

Typically the task of designing safety decals is given to an engineer when they should be focusing on designing and improving products. Do you have the right expertise in-house to work with the printer to create the correct safety decals? Consider the following elements:

- Signal words
- Nature of the hazard
- Hazard Avoidance
- Consequences of not following the avoidance
- Pictorials, especially in multilingual environments
- Combinations of pictorials, warning symbols and signal words

Notes

Step 2

Material Review and Analysis

This second step involves the type of material used throughout the safety communications program. It can be invaluable in saving the company money because both over-engineering or under-engineering a part can be costly.

Items to review regarding materials

- Type of product - including parts per pack, delivery format, labeling and packaging
- Application information - surfaces, paint type and environmental exposures
- Storage environment
- Inventory management
- Label application method
- Printing methods - copy position, secondary printing, imprint method, printer model and agency method

Notes

Step 3

Supply Strategy Review

It is important to review the entire supply chain and examine ways to streamline and simplify. This will ultimately save on costs through increased efficiency.

Evaluate your Supplier Partnerships

Detail the origin of each piece of your safety communications program. Identify supplier, size, use and application specifications.

What other parts or materials does your company require that current suppliers are not able to provide?

Calculate the cost of your supply program. How will dealing with fewer suppliers save the company time and money? Consider:

- Number of vendors, billing policies and procedures
- Number of invoices received monthly
- Number of inventory management systems
- Number of sku's to manage

Identify the benefits of consolidating:

- Besides savings, what else do your suppliers offer?
- Do they keep you on the cutting edge of new adhesives, materials and standards?
- Do they help you make better business decisions?

Notes

Step 4

Obsolescence Identification

Product enhancements, changing standards, new technologies and updated processes can impact your safety communications and make them obsolete. Due to rush charges and overnight delivery, being caught short on your decal program can cost as much as large overstock.

How do you protect against obsolescence?

- How do you stay ahead of updates to standards?
- How do you protect your inventory from early depletion or over-stock?
- What types of precautions do you have in place to ensure that you don't over extend your inventory position and risk production or delivery delays?

Notes

Step 5

Delivery Requirements Review

The last step in the is just as important as the first and, in many instances, is where many cost savings are hidden.

How can you ensure timely and cost effective access to your decals?

- Review sales and production forecasts.
- What are the most cost effective quantities to produce and ship?
- Can different decals be ordered, stored and shipped to minimize holding costs?

Notes

Need Help?

Improving your safety decal management program can be a complicated and time-consuming endeavor. If you need assistance, or would like additional information about the steps listed in this guide, please contact us at any time.

Our safety consultants are well-trained in identifying opportunities to increase efficiency, reduce costs and protect your company from failure-to-warn lawsuits.

Contact: Jim Heckman
Program Manager
704-575-2020
jimh@gmnameplate.com

About GM Nameplate

Established in 1954, GM Nameplate is recognized as a leading international manufacturer specializing in the custom design and manufacture of graphic components including nameplates, decals, labels and custom panels.

GM Nameplate is a trusted partner; we are proud to have been recognized with supplier awards from Fluke Corporation, The Boeing Company, Phoenix International – a John Deere company and more.

GM Nameplate is a privately owned company with corporate headquarters in Seattle, Washington. The company employs nearly 1,000 people throughout facilities in California, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, Canada and Asia.

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