Wayfinding with Directional Signs and Evacuation Maps

Egress route diagrams are required by law as set forth by the authority having jurisdiction. Posting is the responsibility of the Building Coordinator or Facility Manager.

It is important to realize that there is no code requirement for the quantity of egress route maps required in a facility, however, certain states (California Title 19) regulate sign graphics, size and sign placement according to local code. Many jurisdictions also require that Building Evacuation Diagrams be submitted for verification prior to installation.

As PictoGraphix is primarily a signage company and is involved in neither fire protection consulting nor evacuation planning, the onus of developing a fire protection plan remains the responsibility of the client. It is highly recommended that the Authority Having Jurisdiction (fire inspector) be contacted to determine local ordinance requirements before beginning an EvacMap project. Below you will find only our recommendations on how to proceed with the signage component of the Emergency Action Plan.

While PictoGraphix works closely with the client developing the safety signage, the clients' understanding of the facility, occupant traffic flow and local fire code will ultimately determine the effectiveness of an EvacMap sign project. We recommend the following for directional safety signs and maps for all facilities:

1. Building evacuation signs must conform to the fire or building codes as required by the authority having jurisdiction (state, provincial or municipal agency). The following criteria are required or are considered acceptable in most jurisdictions:

   - The signs must show the floor plan for the level on which it is placed. It should be seen immediately by someone entering the floor of the facility.
   - Emergency procedures for the physically disabled should be indicated. It is important that routes to destinations (Exits) be the same for the able bodied and persons in wheel chairs.
   - The signs should indicate the locations of exits and fire alarm pull stations.
   - A description of what the alarm sounds or looks like (audible and visual warning devices) should be mentioned (California).
   - It should list the fire department emergency telephone number (911).
   - If there are elevators on the floors, the signs should indicate clearly that they are not to be used during emergencies.
   - Primary and secondary exit routes should be indicated leading to official Fire Exits (solid and dashed lines; California).
   - Signs should be place between 47-63 inches above the floor (120-160 cm).
   - The sign size: No restrictions but the floor plan diagram and all text must be clearly legible (California sign: min. 144 sq. in.)
2 For directional signs we recommend as good way finding practice the use of four signs per intersection irrespective of its configuration. This ensures maximum visibility of vital directional information for visitors coming from all directions.

3 It is very helpful in complex settings such as hospitals or universities to locate properly oriented or aligned maps strategically at decision points. This will also tend to reduce the need for additional information on signs - particularly if one of the maps displays only local information.

4 When it becomes essential to provide additional information (direction to Exit), this should take the form of additional signs (arrows, Exit signs, etc.). Wayfinders must be able to follow a trail or series of signs located at reassuring intervals, to choose their destination. Once a destination is featured on a directional sign at a given intersection, there is an obligation to include it on every subsequent sign until the destination is reached. In large open-landscape interiors where walls or columns are not available to mount signs, floor pathway marking systems should be considered to ensure that the required destination is reached.

5 The ease of legibility of the signs remains vital to its effectiveness. Safety signs, particularly evacuation diagrams, should be placed on a non-cluttered wall that is not overloaded with information. The wayfinding person should be able to read the map at a glance.

6 In choosing the size of your evacuation sign, keep in mind that the floor plans must fit the chosen casement yet be large enough to remain legible and to accommodate safety icons. Large floor plans may be sectioned into several zones or larger casements/drawings might be needed if the floor plan is too small for proper viewing.

7 Signs should be positioned in areas that are well illuminated.

8 In an emergency situation map viewers must quickly and easily locate their position on the floor plan diagram. It is very important to orient or aligned the maps with the setting they portray (Viewer Specific). When a person stands and looks at the posted floor plan of the facility the natural features of the viewer’s setting (left or right) must be immediately apparent.
Emergency Evacuation Diagrams - Single or Multi Facility Projects

Quote Requirement:

Pictographix will provide a detailed quote for EvacMap design work and display hardware. Multi-facility projects will be quoted on the quantity of signs requested.

The following information should be submitted for a firm quote:

- The following information should be submitted for a firm quote: Pictographix will require facility floor plans to assess the design work for all projects requiring a quote. For similar building multi-facility projects, floor plans for two or three typical buildings are required. Floor plans for a building considered to be typical in size as well as plans for the largest and smallest building must be sent for review.

- For multi-facility projects, a sign schedule must be provided that lists all buildings requiring EvacMaps. The quantity of signs required in each building and the number of levels in the respective facility must be indicated. If floor plans are not currently available, the number of rooms/fl. and the approximate sq./fl. should be forwarded. Only levels requiring EvacMap diagrams should be considered.

- If specific casements or displays are required, the size and sign series should be indicated in the sign schedule. Please note that California Title 19 requires displays 144 sq. in. or larger.

Workflow:

- The client and Pictographix will determine a mutually convenient time frame with respect to data and artwork delivery. Pictographix will accept data in batches of approx. (10) buildings/batch (max 40 buildings/month). Large projects with many files, or files larger than 9 MB must be uploaded to our server.

- Electronic delivery (.pdf) of EvacMap artwork (Proofs) would be available approx. 2-3 weeks following delivery for each batch of buildings (10).

- If printing services, framing or lamination of diagrams are required, a delivery date would be provided.

Template and Artwork Approval:

- Once graphics requirements are established, Pictographix will prepare the sign template(s) for each building level or map area in the project. The sign layout, all text and data must be carefully verified and approved by the client prior to production of the individual evacuation diagrams. (One template revision is include in the Quoted price)

Once all Templates have been approved the individual evacuation diagrams will be produced and again forwarded for approval. Approval at all stages of the project is required to avoid unexpected revisions at a later date.

Artwork for corporate logos or other identifiers must be forwarded prior to template design work.