

TOOLBOX TALK

Workplace Housekeeping

WHY THIS MATTERS

Poor housekeeping is a root cause of slips, trips, falls, fires, and chemical exposure. A messy work site is a dangerous work site. Studies show that 25% of all workplace accidents are directly linked to poor housekeeping. A clean site is everyone's responsibility.

25%

Of workplace accidents linked to poor housekeeping

#1

Most cited OSHA violation category

100%

Housekeeping accidents are preventable

6 Principles of Good Housekeeping

A clean, organized work site is a safe work site — apply these every day:

1

CLEAN AS YOU GO

Don't leave messes for later. Clean debris, spills, and scrap as you create them.

2

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

Every tool, material, and piece of equipment has a designated storage location. Use it.

3

KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR

No materials, cords, hoses, or tools in walkways. Emergency exits must be unblocked at all times.

4

MANAGE WASTE PROPERLY

Separate waste by type. Use correct bins. Empty full containers before they overflow.

5

STACK AND STORE SAFELY

Stack materials evenly and securely. Don't exceed height limits. Keep heavy items low.

6

END-OF-SHIFT CLEANUP

Before you leave, clean your area, return tools, secure materials, and report hazards.

Daily Housekeeping Checklist

- Are all walkways, exits, and stairways clear and unobstructed?
- Are spills cleaned up and wet areas marked with signs?
- Are tools and materials stored in designated locations?
- Are waste bins available, correctly labeled, and not overflowing?
- Are flammable materials stored properly away from ignition sources?

Housekeeping Inspection — What to Check

Floors: Free of spills, debris, loose materials, protruding nails, and uneven surfaces.

Walkways: Clear of tools, cords, hoses, and stored materials. Minimum 28 inches wide at all times.

Storage areas: Materials stacked neatly, secure, and not blocking exits, panels, or fire equipment.

Waste disposal: Correct bins used. Oily rags in self-closing metal containers. Bins not overflowing.

Electrical: No daisy-chained extension cords. Panels accessible with 3-foot clearance. No exposed wiring.

Fire safety: Extinguishers visible and accessible. Flammable storage away from heat. Exit signs illuminated.

Common Mistakes That Cause Accidents

- ✗ "I'll clean it up later" — later never comes, and someone gets hurt in the meantime
- ✗ Stacking materials too high or unevenly — collapse can crush or kill a worker
- ✗ Blocking fire extinguishers and exits — during an emergency, seconds matter
- ✗ Throwing oily rags in regular trash — spontaneous combustion causes fires
- ✗ Leaving power cords across walkways — a trip hazard that takes seconds to fix

Safety Tips to Remember

- ✓ Clean as you go — don't wait until the end of the day, clean throughout the shift
- ✓ If you see it, own it — don't walk past a hazard, fix it or report it immediately
- ✓ 5 minutes of cleanup prevents 5 months of recovery — housekeeping is not optional
- ✓ Keep emergency routes clear at ALL times — your exit path is your lifeline
- ✓ Good housekeeping is a team effort — hold each other accountable every day

Discussion Questions for Your Team

1. What housekeeping issues have you noticed on our site this week?
2. Are our waste bins in the right locations and properly labeled?
3. Is there enough storage space for materials and tools?
4. Who is responsible for end-of-shift cleanup in each area?
5. What would you do if you saw a blocked emergency exit?

TOOLBOX TALK SIGN-OFF

Date: _____ Supervisor: _____

Project: _____ Location: _____

Attendance sheet attached: Yes