

Workplace Housekeeping

Why should we pay attention to housekeeping at work?

- Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help get a job done safely and properly. Poor housekeeping can frequently contribute to accidents by hiding hazards that cause injuries. If the sight of paper, debris, clutter and spills is accepted as normal, then other more serious health and safety hazards may be taken for granted.
- Housekeeping is not just cleanliness. It includes keeping work areas neat and orderly; maintaining halls and floors free of slip and trip hazards, and removing waste materials (e.g. paper, cardboard, food waste, etc.) from all areas, including common areas like an employee center!! It also requires attention to important details such as the layout of the whole workplace, aisle marking, the adequacy of storage facilities, and maintenance. Good housekeeping is also a basic part of accident and fire prevention.
- Effective housekeeping is an ongoing operation; it is not hit-and-miss cleanup done occasionally. Periodic "panic" cleanups are costly and ineffective in reducing accidents.

Good housekeeping is more than just sweeping the floor and taking the garbage to the dumpster. Some of the benefits of good housekeeping include:

- Improved employee morale
- Improved safety culture
- Fewer workplace accidents
- Better hygienic conditions
- Reduced fire hazards
- Lower worker exposures to hazardous products (e.g. dusts, vapors)
- A more organized, efficient and productive workplace
- More efficient cleanup and maintenance tasks

What are some benefits of good housekeeping practices?

Effective housekeeping results in:

- Reduced handling to ease the flow of materials
- Fewer tripping and slipping accidents in clutter-free and spill-free work areas
- Decreased fire hazards
- Lower worker exposures to hazardous substances (dusts, vapors..)
- Better control of tools and materials, including inventory and supplies
- More efficient equipment cleanup and maintenance
- Better hygienic conditions leading to improved health
- More effective use of space
- Reduced property damage by improving preventative maintenance
- Less janitorial work
- Improved morale
- Improved productivity

If you clean up right after you are done doing something, it will take less time than if you continuously put it off, and then frantically have to clean!

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