



Safety Talk: Housekeeping

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

- **CLEANLINESS**
- **ORDER**
- **A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING**

**ARE THE KEYS
TO SAFETY**

Here are real life examples of what happened because of poor housekeeping:

- A mechanic fractured his ankle after he slipped on oil while climbing down from a piece of equipment.
- A machinist slipped on a wet floor and sprained his back.
- An electrician stepped on a tool while climbing down a ladder and sprained his ankle.

All of these accidents could have been prevented through better housekeeping.

A CLEAN AND ORGANIZED WORKPLACE = A SAFE WORKPLACE

Do not allow refuse to collect

- Cardboard, paper, sawdust, grinding debris, and oily rags can increase the fire load in a room
- Cardboard, paper, and cloth can be substrates for mold
- The properties of chemicals can change over time – they may become more reactive or unstable
- Food scraps and litter can attract cockroaches and rodents

Keep floors clean

- Accumulation of objects on the floor can create tripping hazards and make it difficult to maneuver around the work area
- Water or oil spilled on the floor can be especially hazardous since they are difficult to see
- Excessive dirt on the floor can affect footing
- Improper storage of items on the floor could affect the ability of someone to access a fire exit, fire extinguisher, pull station, eyewash, or emergency shower
- Spilled chemicals could migrate to a floor drain and get into the environment

Organize your workspace

- Storing items in designated locations makes them easier to find and prevents a cluttered workspace
- Cluttered work surfaces limit your available workspace
- Improperly stored containers could tip over and spill
- Someone could accidentally get cut from improperly-stored sharp objects such as blades or unprotected sharp parts of stored items

Monitor environmental conditions

- Standing water and excessive moisture can create slip hazards or promote mold growth
- Poor lighting can affect one's ability to observe hazards in their workplace

HOUSEKEEPING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY!

Be proactive with housekeeping:

1. Clean up spills and messes on the floor – even if you did not cause them
2. Address leaky pipes and excessive moisture
3. Do not store combustibles in electrical and mechanical rooms
4. Immediately dispose of boxes when they become empty
5. Take time to ensure walkways and corridors are clear
6. Remember to clean your work area when you are done working
7. Avoid hoarding unnecessary materials
8. Dispose of chemicals that are not being used

Contact Environmental Health and Safety prior to disposing of any chemicals.