



Quick Take on Safety

Shop Housekeeping

TRAINING OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

- Overview: Discusses hazards related to poor housekeeping in a workshop and tips to improve housekeeping at the shop.
- Purpose: Refreshes employees about the hazards of poor housekeeping in a workshop and methods to address them before injuries develop.
- Preparation:
 - Read and become familiar with this Quick Take. *Change as needed to reflect procedures and personnel in your department.*
 - Review where clean-up materials are located and be prepared to share this with employees.
- Handouts: Quick Review of Safety—Shop Housekeeping

Housekeeping Hazards

Housekeeping refers to the cleanliness and order of a workplace. Poor housekeeping can create many hazards.

- Slip, trip and fall hazards are the most common accidents stemming from poor housekeeping.
- Other hazards include an increased risk of fire, blocked exits or hallways, bumping into or stepping on objects and falling objects are other hazards.

Poor housekeeping can also make finding specific items difficult if they were not put away in the correct spot.

Maintaining Good Housekeeping

Good housekeeping is the result of our daily efforts. The work of maintaining a clean and orderly work environment never ends. All of us share the responsibility for keeping the workplace clean throughout the day.

Housekeeping hazards create risk but with proper preparation and an understanding of prevention techniques, we can avoid or control these risks. Your health and safety is important to us; we don't want you to get hurt.

Housekeeping Tips and Best Practices

- Keep all walkways, work surfaces and door exits clear. Obstructions may create tripping hazards and hinder evacuations.
- Keep electrical cords out of walkways. If this is not possible, cover cords to prevent tripping or damage to the cords or equipment. When repositioning cords, avoid using staples or nails that could damage them.
- Hoses, cords and other lines should be coiled up or otherwise stored during breaks and when not in use.
- Fire extinguishers, sprinklers, eyewash or first-aid stations and electrical panels or disconnects must be clearly accessible. Blocking these safety devices can affect their operation and delay response in an emergency.

- Electrical panels must have at least 36 inches of clearance in front and 30 inches wide or the width of the panel, whichever is larger.
- Avoid storing items in boiler or mechanical rooms. These rooms often contain equipment, electrical breaker panels or other devices that require clear space around them so staff can tend to the equipment.
 - Storing items in these rooms can also increase the hazards for slips, trips and falls and delay responses in the event of an emergency in addition to increasing the fire risk.
- Floors, carpets and rugs should be monitored for signs of wrinkling and damage. Address issues as they develop. Entry rugs often become saturated with water or develop curling edges or wrinkles.
- Cover or report holes that are open in the floor. Bridge plates over drainage cuts can loosen or floor hole covers can come loose or be left open.
- Keep drainage routes clear, particularly in garages or wash bays. Debris in the drains increase the risk of slips, trips and falls as water pools on walking surfaces.
- Stairways should be kept clear. Items should not be stored, even temporarily, on stairs or in stairways.
- Return all items to their proper locations after use. If you aren't sure where something goes, ask.
- Items removed from a flammable storage cabinet should be returned to the cabinet after use and the cabinet door securely closed. All flammables must be stored away from exits or exit paths.
- Keep flammable materials away from sparks from grinding or other ignition sources, such as welding.
- When items are stacked, ensure that the material is stable and will not collapse or shift.
- Avoid storing items that protrude into walkways. If it is unavoidable, reduce the hazard with cushioning, flagging or other means.
- Items stored on mezzanines or at height should be secured or otherwise protected from falling.
- Close all drawers or cabinets after use.
- Clean up spills of oil or other fluids (e.g., antifreeze, brake fluid, etc.) promptly. Be sure to use the appropriate clean-up materials. [*Instructor prompt*: give location(s) for clean-up materials.]
 - Floors should be kept dry and clean. Give special attention in winter to melting snow and ice.
 - Be sure to report spills or other situations you cannot address yourself to your supervisor.
- Do not try to clean up blood or other unknown spills unless it is part of your job duties and you know how to proceed safely.
- Clean up any liquid spills or messes immediately. Liquid spills often occur around coffee makers, water dispensers, sinks or in break rooms. Clean up after yourself; it is just good manners.
- Place trash in appropriate containers. Don't leave garbage around the work area.
 - Decaying food in break rooms should be removed promptly and appliances cleaned periodically.
- Dispose of oily, paint-soaked or other flammable waste into approved, covered metal waste receptacles.
- Report burned out light bulbs quickly. Poor lighting can increase the risk of tripping and eye strain.
- Maintain clearance around air vents to enable them to circulate air more effectively.

Discussion Questions

- How can we keep our workplace consistently clean and uncluttered?
- How can we increase accountability for housekeeping among ourselves?

Additional Activities

- Have employees do a short safety check of the shop and their own work areas. If any hazards are found and cannot safely be remedied, compile a list and send to appropriate personnel or the safety committee.
- Use the checklists in the [MCIT Public Works Loss Control Best Practices Guide](#) or the [MCIT Solid Waste Loss Control Best Practices Guide](#). The checklists can be copied and given to employees to inspect specific equipment or areas. Items can then be forwarded to the supervisor and/or the safety committee for review.

Shop Housekeeping Session

Planning and Review

Trainer

Training Date

Department(s)

TRAINING GOALS

- Employees understand the importance of housekeeping.
- Employees know that good housekeeping is everyone's responsibility.
- Employees are aware of the best practices and methods to achieve and maintain good housekeeping in the office.

RESOURCES

- Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust, Step Wisely slip, trip and fall awareness and prevention materials (including housekeeping), MCIT.org/step-wisely/
- Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust, [Public Works Loss Prevention Best Practices Guide](#) or [Solid Waste Management Loss Prevention Best Practices Guide](#), Chapters 15 and 14, respectively, MCIT.org/resource/
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Walking-working Surfaces Standard 1910.22, OSHA.gov

REVIEW

Did the training meet the stated goals?

How can the training be improved?

TRAINER COMMENTS

