

GUIDELINES TO A CLEAN AND SAFE WORKPLACE



This education program provides a guideline for a clean and safe workplace. It is intended to give contractors and workers practical information relating to good housekeeping in the workplace.

This education program contains general information. For specific regulatory requirements, please consult the appropriate regulation concerning Safe Work Practices adopted under the Workplace Safety Health Act & Regulation.

A CLEAN AND SAFE WORKPLACE

Poor housekeeping on the job site is a frequent cause of workplace incidents and worker injuries. These types of incidents can be easily be prevented by keeping the workplace clean. Good housekeeping makes jobs more efficient and safe.

Housekeeping on the job means cleaning up scrap and debris, putting it in containers, and making sure the containers are emptied regularly. It also means proper storage of materials and equipment.

Good on-the-job housekeeping is one of the easiest ways to improve your safety and that of your co-workers. Poor workplace housekeeping creates incidents waiting to happen.

We all know how fast rubbish accumulates on site scrap lumber, broken bricks, pieces of drywall, garbage from coffee breaks and lunches.

Construction rubbish is often irregular in shape, hard to handle, and full of sharp objects. One of the biggest problems is packaging. Too often it gets removed from material and left where it falls. This creates tripping and slipping hazards. It also makes other hazards difficult to see. Even worse, it invites more mess. When the site is not cleaned up, no one cares about leaving garbage where it drops.

People often do not recognize housekeeping as a safety issue until after an incident has occurred. That is when bad housekeeping is revealed.

Day-to-day housekeeping and cleanliness should not be left for employees to do during the last few minutes of the work day. Housekeeping should be an ongoing effort.

Whether employees or employers fill out work orders, pick up after each task or clean the workplace themselves, each one plays a role in keeping the job site clean and safe.

FIRE SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

It is important to know how to prevent fires and what action to take when a fire starts.

There is no second chance when it comes to fires. Work-related fires have taken the lives of hundreds of people and injured countless others. But fires are tragedies that don't have to happen.

PREVENTION

Fires can be avoided through simple, routine housekeeping.

- Make sure storage and working areas are free of trash.
- Dispose of oily rags and similar debris in covered metal containers away from any flame-producing source.
- Empty all trash containers daily.
- Store flammable liquids in sealed, spill proof containers away from ignition sources.

FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

If a fire starts, follow procedures outlined by your company. You may be able to put out a small fire before it spreads with a fire extinguisher. Only use an extinguisher when it is safe to do so, if by any means you are no longer able to safely fight the fire **LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY**.

Proper steps should be taken to notify fellow workers and the Fire Department.

REMEMBER

- Should your path of escape be threatened
- Should the extinguisher run out of agent
- Should the extinguisher prove to be ineffective
- Should you no longer be able to safely fight the fire
- **CLEAR THE AREA IMMEDIATELY!!!!**

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:

To operate a fire extinguisher, use the **PASS** method:

- **P**ull the pin.
- **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze the trigger.
- **S**weep the nozzle back and forth across the base of the flames, covering the area of the fire with the contents of the extinguisher.



Important guidelines to keep in mind on the site.

- Many injuries that occur from poor housekeeping are caused by materials, scrap, debris and trash left lying around the job site.
- Anything left lying around becomes a slipping or tripping hazard.
- Keep all of the materials stored on the job site in a neat and orderly way.
- Clean up scraps, debris, and trash as the work progresses.
- Focus on keeping walkways, ramps, ladder platforms, scaffolds and stairways free from materials, scrap and debris.
- If you are not using tools and equipment at the time, do not leave them lying around.
- Keep hoses, power cords and welding leads from lying across heavily traveled areas.

- Keep mud and other slick substances off walkways, ramps, ladders, platforms, scaffolds and stairways.
- Dispose of greasy, oily rags and other flammable materials in approved containers.
- Secure loose or light material stored on roofs and open floors to keep it from blowing away in the wind.
- Don't let material fall from any level of the project. Use an enclosed chute or lower the material in containers.
- Keep material at least 6 feet away from floor and roof openings, floor and roof edges, excavations, and trenches.
- Housekeeping is especially important when it comes to fire prevention. Flammable rubbish and debris should be immediately removed from the vicinity of welding, flame cutting, propane heating, or other ignition sources.
- Keep fire extinguisher stations clear and accessible.

Good housekeeping is a good way to start improving health and safety on the job. Remember that a cleaner job site is always a much safer job Site.

CLEAN AND SAFE WORKPLACE REVIEW QUESTIONS

ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE TO EACH QUESTION

T / F 1) One of the **least** frequent causes of workplace incidents is poor housekeeping.

T / F 2) Fires **can be avoided** through simple, routine housekeeping.

T / F 3) Anything left lying around **becomes** a potential slipping or tripping hazard.

T / F 4) A clean and safe workplace **should not** be the responsibility of everyone on the work site.

T / F 5) When a site **is cleaned up** no ones cares about leaving garbage where it drops.

T / F 6) Good housekeeping makes a job more **efficient and safe**.

T / F 7) Do not use **water** extinguishers on energized **electrical** equipment.

