

Safety Talks



SET A HIGH STANDARD FOR HOUSEKEEPING

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.

By setting the bar high for housekeeping, you will likely find more benefits than just preventing slips, trips and falls. It is difficult to develop a strong culture of safety when poor housekeeping practices are present. An employee may hear their supervisor comment on the importance of safety, but it is less likely they will believe safety is valued when regularly surrounded by clutter and spills. What message do you want to send about safety?

Establishing strong housekeeping practices is the key to an effective program to prevent slips, trips, and fall injuries. Cluttered hallways can create a trip and fall injury to staff, students or visitors.

Safety Sam Says...

Set a great example for others. Backpacks and book bags should be kept off the floors to prevent others from tripping over them or catching their feet in the straps. This is true for the halls as well as in classrooms. Bags should be stored under chairs with the straps securely tucked under.



CLEAN IT UP

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 clutter and waste materials like paper, cardboard and other fire hazards.

Assess each area - inside and out - for possible trip hazards. This includes boxes, files, materials, and any other items that could potentially be stored on the floor. In many cases, these items can be removed from the floor by organizing them on a shelf or in a cabinet.



In other cases, the trip hazard can be greatly reduced by locating the item or items in a designated area and keeping that area well organized.

Effective housekeeping is an ongoing operation - it is not a hit-and-miss clean-up done occasionally. Periodic "panic" clean-ups are costly and ineffective in reducing incidents. Clean as you go and everyone pitch in to keep your workspace a safer place!

Did You Know?

Poor housekeeping can be the cause of accidents like:

- Tripping over loose objects on floors, stairs and platforms
- Being hit by falling objects
- Slipping on greasy, wet or dirty surfaces
- Cutting, puncturing or tearing the skin of hands or other parts of the body on projecting nails, wire or steel strapping

Effective housekeeping results in:

- Reduced material handling
- Decreased fire hazards
- More effective use of space
- Less janitorial work
- Improved indoor air quality
- Improved morale

