



Establishing a Housekeeping Program

As the WorkSafe People™, we're experts at helping our customers keep their workers safe and their costs down. A trusted name in workers' compensation for a century, Accident Fund is a strong and stable subsidiary of AF Group.

Whether in a factory or an office, proper housekeeping can make all the difference when it comes to maintaining a safe work site.

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1-866-206-5851



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How to Begin

Implementing a good housekeeping program requires careful planning, a clean-up schedule or policy, effective inspection, and continuous supervision and enforcement of housekeeping rules. Make sure to inspect your area for unnecessary tools, equipment, parts, materials and supplies; any unneeded items should be placed in a storage room, toolbox or used for salvage.

As part of the program, reorganization and rules are key.

- Establish one or more storage areas for holding finished products and daily quantities of raw materials and supplies.
- Ensure that storage areas do not obstruct aisles and work areas.
- Create a daily clean-up policy and program.
- Periodically review the housekeeping rules, clean-up policies and procedures and revise as needed.
- Ensure that housekeeping is an ongoing activity that involves all employees. It should be accepted as a normal part of every employee's job performance.

Eliminating Clutter

- Keeping things in order results in greater and safer production of better products at lower costs. Improved production and costs mean increased business and prosperity for your employees.
- Walking and working surfaces should be clean, dry and unobstructed.
- Work area floors should be kept free of pallets, parts, equipment, extension cords and hoses.
- Walls and ceilings should be free of hangings and temporary wiring.
- Materials should be stacked in a stable manner; limit height as necessary to maintain stability.
- Lunch facilities, locker rooms and toilet areas should be clean, orderly and sanitary.
- All passageways to exits must be kept clear.
- Areas around fire extinguishers, electrical panels and emergency equipment should be kept clear.

Enhance Safety through Maintenance

- Reduce the likelihood of falls and related injuries through properly maintained and well-lit walkways, stairs and parking lots.
- Work areas and passageways must have adequate light.
- Use slip-resistant flooring material and finishes.
- Use tempered glass in sliding doors to balconies, patio doors and exit/entrance doors.
- When glass has to be replaced, choose tempered whenever possible.
- When cleaning furniture, fixtures and equipment, inspect them for loose connections and worn or frayed parts.
- Report all problems to your supervisor immediately; remove the item from service if corrective action cannot be taken.

The Importance of Identification

Container labels and Material Safety Data Sheets identify chemical hazards, so read them carefully before starting any job involving a chemical.

- Labels provide a brief summary of hazards; if the label is missing or too damaged to read, do not use the chemical.
- An MSDS details a chemical's hazards, signs of exposure, situations that make the chemical more dangerous, clean-up procedures and procedures/equipment to use to reduce exposure risk.
- Other safety information, which may be found on chemical labels or MSDSs, include: handling and storage requirements (e.g., ventilation, avoiding heat exposure), the personal protective equipment required when using the chemical, and the signs and symptoms of exposure that could cause health problems.

Bloodborne Pathogens Housekeeping

All equipment and work sites that may be contaminated with human blood or other potentially infectious human body fluids shall be cleaned by trained employees.

- When cleaning a potentially contaminated work area, household bleach diluted in water (10% concentration) or other disinfectants should be used.
- Bags or containers must be red and labeled with at least one of the following wordings: “BIOHAZARD,” “INFECTIOUS WASTE,” or the biological hazard symbol must be printed directly on the red bag or container.

Housekeeping Makes a Difference

In an industrial setting:

- Clean and store tools properly.
- Remove broken tools from service until they are fixed or replaced.
- Store materials properly. (Flammable liquids must be clearly marked.)
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Maintain lighting.

In a laboratory setting:

- Follow established procedures for chemical spill clean-up and disposal.
- Maintain container labels in good condition.
- Keep all instruments and equipment free from chemicals, dust and debris build-up.
- Know how to find, read, and apply the information available in your organization’s Chemical Hygiene Plan and on the Material Safety Data Sheets.

In an office setting:

- Keep aisles clean.
- Close file and desk drawers.
- Keep your desktop free of piles of material.
- Store sharp objects – scissors, letter openers, staple removers – in locations where they may be retrieved without injuring the individual.
- File all loose paper to minimize fire hazards.

In a restaurant setting:

- Keep floors clean and dry – all spills should be cleaned up immediately.
- Use portable signs to alert other employees and customers of damp floors when mopping an area. Also, use floor fans to dry floors.
- Keep aisles, stairways and exits clear of obstructions. Brooms, mops and pails should be stored in designated areas, along with cleaning agents.
- Avoid carrying wet dishes or bus pans through service aisles.
- Identify locations where spills can occur, water and dirt are tracked in and people constantly walk, and place non-skid floor mats in these areas, which can help prevent slips and falls. Mats can also help relieve back and leg strain.
- Be sure to keep kitchen space uncluttered and free of tripping hazards.

Want to know more?

As your WorkSafe Consultants, we’re committed to providing you unrivaled loss control services and online safety materials, including:

- Safety-training modules accessible 24/7 for policyholders’ employees
- Loss control booklets and other printed materials available to print and order from our website
- Low-cost safety training videos from our online library

Check them out today at AccidentFund.com.



Protect Against Slips, Trips or Falls

- Be alert — watch where you are going. When walking with a load, be sure the load does not obstruct your view.
- Check the conditions of the floors, stairs, ladders and work area. Report defects immediately.
- Look for floor elevation changes (manholes, drains, uneven pavement). Paint any elevation changes with brightly colored paint to make more visible.
- Place signs out when a floor area is slippery.
- Clean up all spills when they happen.
- Conduct a good housekeeping walk-through on a daily basis.
- Maintain non-slip surfaces on loading ramps.
- Remove ladders from service with loose or broken rungs.
- Develop a written company policy that addresses commitment, scope of activity, responsibility and standards when it comes to preventing slips, trips and falls.
- Establish an acceptable maintenance standard for walkways (include snow and ice removal if it applies).
- Establish a dress code for shoes, including acceptable standards for specific job classifications and working conditions.