

### Housekeeping Is Safe-keeping at Work

What does housekeeping have to do with safety? The answer is everything! Poor housekeeping can lead to slips, trips, and falls, being struck by out-of-place objects, and injuries caused by using improper tools because the correct tools cannot be found.

Housekeeping is every workers responsibility and a primary part in accident prevention. A general training program on housekeeping can help prevent hazards, such as, obstructed aisles and exits, debris on the floors, and tools and equipment that are not put away. Employees should be trained to routinely clean and organize their work areas to prevent hazards and promptly report and/or correct hazards in the workplace.

The California Code of Regulations Title 8 has established general requirements for housekeeping for all places of employment. In general, these requirements state that:

- All places of employment shall be kept clean, orderly, and in sanitary condition
- Workroom floors shall be kept clean and dry; where wet processes are used, drainage, false floors, platforms, mats, and/or other dry standing places should be provided where practicable
- Floors, working places, and passageways are to be free from protruding nails, splinters, holes, or loose boards

It also covers the following items:

- Solid and liquid waste
- Disposal of cleaners, oils, solvents, and rags
- Vermin control
- Eating and drinking areas
- Water supply, both potable and non-potable
- Toilet and washing facilities
- Sanitary storage

Improve general housekeeping with the implementation of a routine cleaning schedule and hold employees accountable for their work areas.

- Check lighting and clear aisle ways and exit routes.
- Remove hazardous objects.
- Stack materials and supplies and secure them to avoid falling objects.

Provide an area for employees to store and maintain their personal protective equipment (PPE).

Continuously update your Hazard Communication program including storage (never store hazardous substances with PPE), labels, Safety Data Sheets, and disposal of chemicals that you no longer use. Dispose of combustibles and flammables properly. As part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Program you are required to conduct safety inspections of your facility. The benefits of good housekeeping include: fewer accidents and injuries, more effective use of space, efficient equipment clean-up and maintenance, less exposure to hazardous substances, decreased fire hazards, and improved employee morale.