



# 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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## 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](http://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.

