

Fundamentals of Housekeeping

A SAFETY TALK FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

This safety talk is designed for discussion leaders to use in preparing safety meetings.

Set a specific time and date for your safety meeting. Publicize your meeting so everyone involved will be sure to attend.

Review this safety talk before the meeting and become familiar with its content. Make notes about the points made in this talk that pertain to your workplace. You should be able to present the material in your own words and lead the discussion without reading it.

Seating space is not absolutely necessary, but arrangements should be made so that those attending can easily see and hear the presentation.

Collect whatever materials and props you will need ahead of time. Try to use equipment in your workplace to demonstrate your points.

DURING THE MEETING

Give the safety talk in your own words. Use the printed talk merely as a guide.

The purpose of a safety meeting is to initiate discussion of safety problems and provide solutions to those problems. Encourage employees to discuss hazards or potential hazards they encounter on the job. Ask them to suggest ways to improve safety in their area.

Don't let the meeting turn into a gripe session about unrelated topics. As discussion leader, it's your job to make sure the topic is safety. Discussing other topics wastes time and can ruin the effectiveness of your safety meeting.

At the end of the meeting, ask employees to sign a sheet on the back of this talk as a record that they attended the safety meeting. Keep this talk on file for your records.

Fundamentals of Housekeeping

An uncluttered workplace is fundamental to any plant's safety program. In addition to cleanliness, industrial housekeeping must include other factors, such as orderliness and proper arrangement of materials. It is important to know the benefits of good industrial housekeeping. Let's review the importance and meaning of order in achieving good housekeeping, and discuss some guides for checking your own work area.

WHY GOOD HOUSEKEEPING?

Sloppy working conditions can lead to a lack of pride in your work. We should not overlook slippery floors, obstacles in aisles, tools on the floors, floors and platforms that are not in proper condition, or other housekeeping hazards.

In addition to encouraging poor attitudes, **bad industrial housekeeping can lead to:**

- Slips from slick or wet floors, platforms, and other walking and working surfaces.
- Trips from objects or materials that are left in walkways and work areas.
- Falls from holes in walking and working surfaces, uneven flooring, uncovered pits or drains, and boxes and pallets that are used instead of adequate platforms.
- Collisions caused by poorly stored materials, overhanging or protruding objects, haphazard spotting of pallets, and use of aisles for storing materials and equipment.

Poor industrial housekeeping creates hazards for all employees in the immediate area.

Good industrial housekeeping:

- Eliminates accident and fire causes
- Saves energy by eliminating the need to work "around" congested areas and "deadwood" stored in the work area.
- Provides the best use of space
- Keeps inventory of materials to a minimum
- Helps control property damage

- Guarantees a good workplace appearance
- Encourages better working habits
- Reflects an image of a well-run operation
- Reduces the amount of cleanup and janitorial work

ORDER

Housekeeping is more than just sweeping the floor and wiping dust off machines and equipment. Cleanliness is only a part of housekeeping. The most critical and most overlooked part of housekeeping is ORDER. A work area is in order when there are no unnecessary objects in the area and when all necessary items are in their proper places.

NO in this definition means NONE--NOT ANY--NOT EVEN ONE!

A workplace is not considered to be in order simply because "there is a place for everything and everything is in its place."

Do you use your production area for storage? Do you keep supplies in the area because "they'll be needed one of these days?" If there is one item in an area that is unnecessary or not in its proper place, then you do not have order.

Order is maintained, not achieved. You cannot put an area in order and then forget about it. A daily conscious effort by everyone working in the area is necessary to maintain order. Order also must be obtained throughout the day. If you wait until the end of the day and then place everything in order, what good did it do you during the day? Disorder wastes time, energy and materials.

ESTABLISHING A HOUSEKEEPING PROGRAM

A good housekeeping program must include careful planning, a clean-up schedule or policy, effective inspection, and continuous supervision and enforcement of house-keeping rules.

Inspect your area for unnecessary tools, equipment, parts, materials and supplies; items that are not needed should be sent to the storage room or used for salvage.

Reorganize the storage area in your workplace. Establish one or more storage areas for holding finished products and daily quantities of raw materials and supplies; storage areas should not obstruct aisles and work areas.

Create a daily clean-up policy and program. Periodically review the housekeeping rules, clean-up policies and procedures.

HOUSEKEEPING RULES

- Walking and working surfaces should be clean, dry and unobstructed.
- Aisleways and exits should be clearly marked and unobstructed.
- Approved trash receptacles should be provided to assure proper waste disposal.
- Splash guards and oil pans should be available for machinery as needed.
- Work area floors should be kept free of pallets, parts, equipment, extension cords and hoses.
- Floors, platforms and stairways should be kept in good repair.
- Adequate platforms should be provided; never use additional platforms or boxes and pallets as substitutes.
- 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.
- Overhanging or protruding storage should be eliminated.
- Storage areas in and around buildings should be free of refuse and debris.
- Stock should be stored in a manner that will not obstruct sprinklers (18-inch clearance for ordinary combustibles, 36-inch clearance for flammable liquids). Combustible materials should never be stored on radiators, steam coils, ovens or other heat sources; in transformer vaults; or around electrical switch gear.
- Production equipment should be arranged to prevent overcrowding.
- Storage areas should be placed in a convenient location to encourage their use.
- Adequate lighting, both natural and artificial, should be provided to assure good visibility for work activities and to reveal dirt, obstructions and poor housekeeping conditions.
- Leaks from hoses, pipelines and valves should be repaired immediately.
- Racks, shelves and lockers should be maintained for tools, personal protective equipment and personal items.
- Lunch facilities, locker rooms and toilet areas should be clean, orderly and sanitary.

- Order results in greater and safer production of better products at lower costs. Improved production and costs mean increased business and prosperity for our company and you, its employees.