



General Housekeeping in the Workplace

Instructor: *The following script can be used to deliver a 15- minute training session to employees.*

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE

- Floors and other areas.
- Aisles and stairways.
- Spill control.
- Equipment and machinery maintenance.
- Storage.
- Fire prevention.
- Waste disposal.
- Maintain light fixtures.

Effective house keeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help get a job done easily and properly.

A good housekeeping program plans and manages the orderly storage and movement of materials from point of entry to exit. It includes a material flow plan to ensure minimal handling.

Worker training is an essential part of any good housekeeping program. They should be reporting any unusual conditions or hazards as well as obeying posted warning signs.

The final addition to any housekeeping program is inspection. It is the only way to check for deficiencies in the program so that changes can be made.

Floors and other areas

Clean up spills such as oil on floors immediately. Floors should be free of debris and accumulations of dust. Areas that cannot be cleaned continuously, such as entranceways, should have anti-slip flooring.

Replace any worn, ripped or damaged flooring that poses a tripping hazard. Repair all trap doors and railings. Any equipment or tools not in use should be removed from the work area.

Guard floor openings. Trap doors, cages or railings around hay chutes will prevent anyone from accidentally falling into them.

Cut down and remove weeds and brush from around buildings. They can hide tripping hazards.

Maintain light fixtures

All buildings and yards should be adequately lighted. Dirty light fixtures reduce essential light levels. Light fixtures in storage areas containing combustible materials should be protected against breaking (i.e. explosion proof fixtures).

Maintain lighting evenly, since shadows mixed with light spots inside animal handling facilities will increase the animal's fear and tension.

Aisles and stairways

Aisles and stairways should be clearly marked and kept clear of objects that can cause trips and falls.

Aisles should be wide enough to accommodate people and vehicles comfortably and safely. Warning signs and mirrors can improve sight lines at blind corners. Properly arranged aisles encourage people to use them so that they do not take "shortcuts" or "bottleneck" storage. Stairways and aisles also require adequate lighting.

Spill control

The best way to control spills is to stop them before they happen. Regularly cleaning and maintaining machines and equipment is one way to do this. Another is to use drip pans and guards where possible spills might occur. When spills do occur, it is important to follow cleanup procedures as indicated on the Material Safety Data Sheet. Spills must be cleaned up immediately. Absorbent material is useful for wiping up greasy, oily or other liquid spills. Used absorbents must be disposed of properly and safely.

Tools and equipment

Keeping tools neat and orderly can be very important to everyone's safety, whether in the tool room, on the rack, in the yard, or on the bench.

Returning tools promptly after use reduces the chance of them being misplaced or lost. Workers should regularly inspect, clean and repair all tools and take any damaged or worn tools out of service.

Maintenance

A good maintenance program provides for the inspection, maintenance, upkeep and repair of tools, equipment, machines and processes.

Maintenance involves keeping buildings, equipment and machinery in safe efficient working order and in good repair. This includes maintaining sanitary facilities and regularly painting and cleaning walls, maintaining

windows, damaged doors, defective plumbing and broken floor surfaces

Waste disposal

The regular collection, grading and sorting of scrap contributes to good housekeeping practices. Allowing materials to build up on the floor wastes time and energy since additional time is required for cleaning it up.

Placing scrap containers near where the waste is produced encourages orderly waste disposal and makes collection easier. All waste receptacles should be clearly labeled (e.g., recyclable glass, plastic, metal, toxic and flammable etc.) All waste containers should be emptied regularly.

Storage

Stored materials should allow at least one meter (or about 3 feet) of clear space under sprinkler heads. Stacking cartons and drums on a firm foundation and cross tying them, where necessary reduces the chance of their

movement. Stored materials should not obstruct aisles, stairs, exits, fire equipment, emergency eyewash fountains, emergency showers, or first aid stations.

All storage areas should be clearly marked

Fire prevention

Flammable, combustible, toxic and other hazardous materials should be stored in approved containers in designated areas that are appropriate for the different hazards that they pose.

All combustible and flammable material must be present only in the quantities needed for the job and kept in safety cans during use. Oily or greasy rags should be placed in a metal container and disposed of regularly.

Are there any questions?

Finally, let's take a moment to review some of the Do's and Don'ts of housekeeping

DO:

- Keep floors clean and clear of waste.
- Keep workplaces adequately lighted.
- Keep light fixtures clean.
- Inspect and clean machinery and tools regularly.
- Clean up spills immediately.

DON'T:

- Use aisles and stairways as storage areas.
- Allow materials to build up on floors.
- Block emergency exits, fire equipment or first aid stations with stored materials.
- Store compressed gases near heat sources.

The information and recommendations contained in this publication are believed to be reliable and representative of contemporary expert opinion on the subject material. The Farm Safety Association Inc. does not guarantee absolute accuracy or sufficiency of subject material, nor can it accept responsibility for health and safety recommendations that may have been omitted due to particular and exceptional conditions and circumstances.

Copyright © 2002 Farm Safety Association Inc.
22-340 Woodlawn Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1H 7K6 (519) 823-5600.

Produced with the assistance of:



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada



Ontario

Ministry of
Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs