



Companies that hold general housekeeping of work areas to a high standard usually have a better safety culture than those companies that do not. Housekeeping is an important part of a robust safety program.

POOR HOUSEKEEPING

Poor housekeeping promotes inefficiency as well as leads to injuries and property loss, such as:

- Inefficiencies
 - Lower production due to trying to work around trash etc. Slip, trip, and fall injuries
- Injuries
 - Caught in/between injuries • Sprains/strains due to unnecessary lifting and handling of objects that are in the way
- Property Loss
 - Property damage incidents involving moving equipment or vehicles
 - Possible damage to building materials or fixtures
 - Poor housekeeping also sets a bad example for our clients or inspectors.

WAYS TO IMPROVE THE GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING IN YOUR WORK AREA

- Create lay-down yards for equipment and tools when out in the field. At the end of the task, return tools and equipment to their proper locations, such as a workshop or toolbox.
- Designate walking areas or paths for employees in the work area and keep equipment and objects out of that path.
- Designate parking areas within specific work areas to avoid clutter and vehicles or equipment striking objects around them.
- Barricade or place orange fencing around objects or areas where equipment, vehicles, or people should not be. This also helps control points of access into work areas.
- Keep tools and equipment clean. Heavy equipment should not have loose cargo, such as trash, in the cab. These items can be a distraction or interfere with the controls. Designate a time each day to have a cleanup.
- Provide adequate trash cans throughout site.
- Designate someone to monitor trash receptacles and ensure they are frequently emptied and that dumpsters are ordered on time.
- Be mindful of trash and loose items on the roof where they could blow off and injure someone or damage something.

Paying attention to the small details translates to bigger changes in the safety culture in the field. Not only does good housekeeping help to lower property loss incidents as well as injuries, but it also shows the maturity of a safety culture within a company. Many of us work for a larger contractor or client in the construction industry, and when your work areas are always clean and tidy, it shows the responsibility of your company to address the small issues on-site. Overlooking simple issues such as housekeeping can lead to big problems with injuries and property loss.