

## TT027 - Housekeeping

January 2025

**Incidents and near-miss events involving housekeeping are one of the *most reported* occurrences on construction sites. In addition to reducing the risk of injury, good housekeeping practices can have a positive impact on a business and its employees.**

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### What is Housekeeping?

- It involves **every phase of operations** and applies throughout the entire worksite.
- It is more than mere cleanliness - it requires a **structured approach** and **coordination**.
- It is a good advertisement for your business. Customers have confidence when they see work being carried out efficiently in tidy surroundings.
- Good worker morale is achieved/maintained. Most people do not like untidiness and unsafe conditions (although may not admit this publicly).

### Housekeeping and Safety:

There are inherent dangers on a worksite simply because of the nature of the work. When compounded with clutter and debris, the risk of injury substantially increases.

This also reduces work efficiency (due to workers trying to avoid tripping over debris or finding things!).

***Keeping the site clear of debris can significantly reduce the probability of injuries from occurring and increase efficiency.***

The benefits of a worksite free of slip/trip hazards far outweighs the small amount of effort required in keeping it tidy.

**EVERYONE HAS A PART TO PLAY.**

### Housekeeping Related Injuries:

The most common types of injuries that occur on a worksite are slips, trips, falls, cuts and lacerations. Many of these injuries can be attributed to poor housekeeping. As a result of a slip, trip or fall (on the same level), workers could suffer fractures (fractured wrist is a common injury from a fall due to putting the hands out to break the fall or striking something), sprains (overextension of muscles trying to maintain balance, minimise effects of fall or landing in awkward position for the joint/muscle), cuts (when the person lands on or strikes something sharp). They could also strike their head either during the fall or on the ground, resulting in a serious head injury.



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### Housekeeping Tips:

- **Coordinate** with other Contractors/Workers to ensure everybody contributes.
- **Plan** the work including storage of materials and the disposal of scrap, waste and surplus materials.
- **Designate** suitable areas and provide containers for waste materials.
- **Plan** in some time to remove waste periodically to prevent build up.
- Keep stairways, passageways, ladders, scaffolds and walkways **free of obstructions**, materials and supplies.
- Secure loose or light material that is stored or placed at height.
- Don't stack materials on scaffolding above kick boards.
- Keep materials away from ceiling openings and roof edges.
- **Isolate** the area where materials could fall.
- Remove or bend over protruding nails.
- **Prevent** hoses and power cords from laying in walkways.
- Ensure all equipment and tools are **well maintained** and in good working order (reducing risk of breakdown and being left on site as obstruction).
- Store tools and materials neatly off the floor and out of the way.
- Store hazardous substances in secondary containment bins to reduce the risk of spills.
- Wipe up water and spilled liquids as soon as they occur. Use appropriate signage for wet and/or hazardous areas.
- **Report issues** with housekeeping, particularly when risks of injury increase.



Everyone is responsible for safety. Everyone must work together to keep a safe work environment simply by cleaning up after themselves and disposing of worksite waste properly.

**Good housekeeping is good business.**

### **MAKE GOOD HOUSEKEEPING YOUR PRIORITY!**

#### Questions and Answers:

Q. What are the benefits of good housekeeping?

A.

- ✓ *Significantly reduce the probability of accidents and injuries from occurring.*
- ✓ *Provides a sound basis on which to strengthen overall safety practices.*
- ✓ *Good advertisement for your business.*
- ✓ *Improves morale of employees.*

Q. What are the most common injuries that occur as a result of poor housekeeping?

A.

- ✓ *Slips, trips and falls.*
- ✓ *Cuts and Lacerations.*

