

YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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Good Housekeeping

It's as important at work as it is at home

Most people have housecleaning responsibilities at home. And most will probably agree (perhaps reluctantly) that good housekeeping practices are important to keep the home sanitary and orderly.

Many people, however, overlook the fact that good housekeeping is just as important at work. If you have any doubt about that, you need only read OSHA's rule on housekeeping:

"All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition."

In addition to the requirements of the regulations, keep two other points in mind:

1. Good housekeeping is fundamental to your safety and health—it isn't just about neatness or consideration of others.
2. Housekeeping duties are a part of everyone's job. No matter what other tasks you perform, you're also responsible for keeping the workplace clean, organized, and safe. Your job is not finished until you've cleaned up.

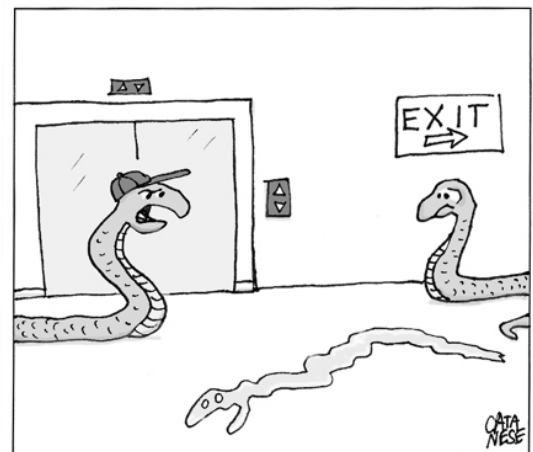
With those two points in mind, consider these suggestions:

- ✦ **Make time for housekeeping.** Establish a cleanup routine for yourself, such as devoting the last 5 or 10 minutes of your shift to housekeeping duties.
- ✦ **Conduct regular work area inspections.** Daily and weekly inspections of your work area not only help you ensure that housekeeping standards are being maintained, they also help you keep alert to hazards.
- ✦ **Use a checklist.** Create a housekeeping checklist for your workstation and surrounding area, and use it when you inspect.

Good, safe housekeeping doesn't just happen. Nor is it something you can do once a month and forget about. It's a daily mission that must be tackled with energy, focus, and purpose. You have to plan for it and sustain it. When you do, the rewards are substantial—fewer accidents, greater productivity, and a more pleasant, healthy place for all to work.

Effective housekeeping plans include:

- ☑ **Floors**—swept, washed, and well maintained, free of slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- ☑ **Aisles**—kept clear of materials, protruding objects, and other obstructions.
- ☑ **Entryways and exits**—maintained free of slip, trip, and fall hazards as well as materials and other obstructions.
- ☑ **Stairs**—well lit and free of obstructions and slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- ☑ **Workstations**—clean, uncluttered, and well organized for safe, productive work.
- ☑ **Storage**—materials properly stored, arranged, and marked; safe stacking heights; hazardous materials stored according to compatibility and ventilation requirements; tools in the proper place.
- ☑ **Waste disposal**—waste properly disposed of in suitable containers that are emptied regularly.



**"Hey, you know the rules:
You shed it, you clean it."**

Hazard Warning

How toxic chemicals get into your body

Almost all chemicals in the workplace are toxic to some extent. Even common substances like solvents and cleaning products may be hazardous to your health. There are three routes that chemicals take to enter your body:

- 1. Skin or eyes.** Chemicals can cause burns, rashes, or allergies if they contact your skin. Some chemicals can pass through your skin into your bloodstream and poison you. If they get in your eyes, they can cause vision problems or even blindness.
- 2. Nose or mouth.** Breathing in hazardous chemical vapors, fumes, or dust can cause dizziness, nausea, or headaches. It could also damage your throat and respiratory system, including your lungs. In some cases, inhalation can lead to unconsciousness, asphyxiation, and death.
- 3. Mouth.** If you eat, drink, or smoke after handling chemicals without washing first there's a risk that poisons can get into your body and cause damage to your internal organs.

Always protect your body by wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as eye protection, gloves, and protective clothing to cover your skin. PPE provides a barrier between toxic chemicals and your body. Also be sure to read the health warnings on the container label and in the material safety data sheet (MSDS).

Falls Can Be Deadly

Take precautions to protect yourself

Falls account for 1 in 10 workplace deaths each year and cause over 30,000 disabling injuries, plus thousands more lesser injuries, such as strains, sprains, and fractures. Falls are also the major cause of deadly accidents at home. Here are the three basic ways you can fall:

- 1.** Slip and lose your balance
- 2.** Trip over something on the floor
- 3.** Fall from a position on which you are being supported above the floor or ground—for example, from a ladder.

Protect yourself from these hazards by:

- ➔ Wearing proper shoes
- ➔ Staying alert—look where you're going, notice what's around you, and eliminate unsafe conditions if you can and report them if you can't
- ➔ Walking, not running, and being more careful when you're tired
- ➔ Keeping walkways and stairs clear and cleaning up spills promptly
- ➔ Being extra careful when working on ladders

If you do fall, remember to **(1)** bend your elbows and knees so your legs and arms absorb the fall, **(2)** roll with the fall, **(3)** defend vital areas—protect your head by tucking it into either collarbone, **(4)** use the insides of your forearms along with your hands to break the fall, and **(5)** yell and exhale as you fall.

CHEMICAL SAFETY

DO:

- Read the label and the MSDS before starting a job and follow instructions.
- Use protective equipment and clothing.
- Use approved and labeled containers for storing and transporting chemicals.
- Follow instructions when removing chemicals from containers, and only remove as much as you need.
- Make sure there's enough ventilation.
- Keep flammable liquids away from ignition sources.
- Store chemicals properly, keeping incompatible chemicals separated.
- Check containers frequently to ensure they're tightly sealed and aren't leaking.
- Wash carefully after using any chemical, and dispose of contaminated clothing and equipment properly.
- Know whom to contact and what to do in an emergency involving chemical spills or exposure.

DON'T:

- Don't leave chemical containers open when not in use.
- Don't depend on a bad smell to warn you of hazardous vapors—some chemicals are odorless.
- Don't mix a chemical with another substance—even water—unless you have checked the MSDS.
- Don't breathe chemical vapors. Wear a respirator, if necessary.
- Don't smoke, eat, drink, or apply cosmetics around chemicals.
- Don't wear contact lenses if chemical vapors may be present.
- Don't pour chemicals down the sink. It is probably illegal!! Dispose of chemical wastes according to California laws & regulations..
- Don't hesitate to ask your supervisor if you are unsure of any hazard or procedure.

Workplace Violence

Know how to respond to violent acts

One in six violent crimes occurs in the workplace. Surveys show that one in four workers reports being attacked, threatened, or harassed on the job. Homicide is now second only to motor vehicle accidents as a cause of work-related deaths. Attackers may be criminals who gain entry into the workplace, co-workers, customers, or even angry ex's or family members.

Although the statistics are alarming, you're less likely to be a victim of violence at work than almost anywhere else. But it can occur, so it's best to be prepared. The way you respond to violence can help save lives and capture criminals:

- Give a robber what he or she wants—don't try to be a hero.
- Report all criminal or violent acts to authorities.
- Don't wash or change clothes after a sexual assault until you've had a medical examination.
- Describe the crime and the criminal in as much detail as possible.
- List anything that was stolen.
- Don't touch or move anything at a crime scene without permission.
- Confront your feelings. Recognize that pain, fear, stress, and other emotions are natural.
- Don't blame yourself. The attacker is guilty; you're not.
- Seek counseling if you need help in coping with the aftermath of violence.



Power Pop Quiz

Test your knowledge of electrical safety

It's important to know how to avoid electrical shocks and burns or electrocution. So test your electrical safety knowledge with this short quiz.

- | | | | |
|----|---|----------|----------|
| 1. | The human body is a very poor conductor of electricity. | T | F |
| 2. | If you are standing on a wet floor when you touch a piece of electrical equipment, you are more likely to get a shock than if you were standing on a dry floor. | T | F |
| 3. | Any experienced person is qualified to repair or perform maintenance on electrical equipment. | T | F |
| 4. | If an electrical cord is worn or damaged so that you can see wire showing through the insulation, you should wrap some tape around it. | T | F |
| 5. | Never contact anything electrical with anything metal. | T | F |
| 6. | Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in all wet locations. | T | F |

Answers:

- (1) False. The body is a good conductor, which increases your chances of getting an electrical shock.
- (2) True.
- (3) False. Only specially trained, qualified, and authorized personnel may repair or maintain electrical equipment.
- (4) False. Report any worn or damaged wiring right away and don't use the equipment until it is fixed.
- (5) True.
- (6) True.

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