

HOUSEKEEPING

OVER ►

Every year, poor housekeeping and storage account for a significant percentage of accidents and injuries in construction. Good housekeeping isn't just about keeping the site tidy—it's a critical safety practice that prevents injuries, improves workflow, and keeps everyone focused on the job. Housekeeping is everyone's responsibility. A tidy site reduces risks, boosts productivity, and helps ensure every worker goes home safely.

Housekeeping Tips

- » Identify housekeeping hazards
- » Identify control measures to improve housekeeping
- » Address housekeeping issues promptly



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HOUSEKEEPING

Housekeeping Hazards

- Cluttered walkways from tools, cords, and materials blocking paths
- Accumulated debris such as scrap wood, packaging, and off-cuts left on the ground
- Improper material storage can create unstable stacks of lumber, drywall, or supplies that may tip over
- Spills or wet surfaces including water, mud, or fluids creating slip hazards
- Unsecured cords and hoses create tripping hazards across work areas
- Construction waste can be irregular in shape, hard to handle, and full of sharp objects
- Packaging that is removed from material and left wherever it falls
- Garbage and debris also make other hazards hard to see such as faulty wiring, protruding nails, damaged flooring and missing scaffold planks
- Poor housekeeping makes it difficult to use material-handling equipment resulting in more material being handled manually, which increases the risk of injury and damage

Control Measures to Improve Housekeeping

- Clean as you go to remove debris and waste throughout the day
- Designate storage areas and keep tools, materials, and equipment in assigned locations
- Use proper waste bins to dispose of scrap and garbage promptly
- Secure cords and hoses by using cable covers or route them away from walkways
- Maintain clear access routes by keeping stairs, ladders, and exits unobstructed
- Keep equipment and the areas around equipment free of scrap and debris
- Before handling used lumber, remove or bend any protruding nails and chip away hardened concrete
- Remove flammable rubbish and debris immediately from the vicinity of welding, flame cutting, propane heating, and other ignition sources
- Do not allow material or equipment to be piled or stored under an overhead power line. Keep back the minimum distance of 18 feet (5.5 meters)

Address Housekeeping Issues Promptly

- Ensure there are housekeeping practices/procedures in place that are regularly reviewed with workers
- Review housekeeping problems unique to your crew
- Discuss housekeeping problems from other on-site areas
- Report hazards immediately to your supervisor
- Take action as soon as possible. Don't wait for someone else to fix unsafe conditions