HOUSEKEEPING

*What is the purpose of workplace housekeeping?*

Poor housekeeping can be a cause of accidents, such as:

* tripping over loose objects on floors, stairs, and platforms
* being hit by falling objects
* slipping on greasy, wet, or dirty surfaces
* striking against projecting, poorly stacked items, or misplaced material
* cutting, puncturing, or tearing the skin of hands or other parts of the body on projecting nails, wire or steel strapping.

To avoid these hazards, a workplace must "maintain" order throughout a workday. Although this effort requires a great deal of management and planning, the benefits are many.

*How do we implement an effective housekeeping program?*

Housekeeping order is "maintained" not "achieved." Cleaning and organization must be done regularly, not just at the end of the shift. Integrating housekeeping into jobs can help ensure this is done.

A good housekeeping program identifies and assigns responsibilities for the following:

* clean up during the shift
* day-to-day cleanup
* waste disposal
* removal of unused materials
* inspection to ensure cleanup is complete

Do not forget out-of-the-way places such as shelves, basements, sheds, and boiler rooms that would otherwise be overlooked. The orderly arrangement of operations, tools, equipment, and supplies is an important part of a good housekeeping program.

Effective housekeeping is an ongoing operation, it is not a hit-and-miss cleanup done occasionally. Periodic "panic" cleanups are costly and ineffective in reducing accidents.