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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

"Housekeeping" Tips

Housekeeping isn't just vacuuming and dusting. Housekeeping applies to your place of business as well. It is a very important factor in providing a safe workplace for you and your employees. It can help prevent injuries and improve productivity and morale, as well as make a good first impression on visitors.

Housekeeping should be an ongoing process and not just a one-time practice. Employee involvement is key. Employees who are trained good housekeeping traits from day one will carry this forward throughout their employment.

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Tips for Effective Housekeeping

#1 Clear clutter

A cluttered workplace can lead to possible injuries because workers have less space to move. Keep aisles, work areas, emergency exits, electrical panels and doors clear of clutter. Empty trash receptacles before they overflow.

#2 – Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls are one of the leading causes of nonfatal occupational injuries or illnesses involving days away from work. OSHA's Walking-Working Surfaces Standard (1910.22(a)) states that all workplaces should be "kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition." The rule includes passageways, storerooms and service rooms. Floors should be clean and dry. Drainage should be present where "wet processes are used." If you don't use the right kind of cleaning protocols, things like oils and grease will only spread slipperiness around rather than getting it up and off the floor.

#3 – Avoid Tracking Hazardous Materials

Work-area mats – which can be cloth or sticky-topped – should be kept clean and maintained. This helps prevent the spread of hazardous materials to other work areas or home. Check all mats to ensure they are not tripping hazards. Additionally, separate cleaning protocols may be needed for different areas to prevent cross-contamination. Avoid using the same mop to clean both an oily spill and in another area.



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#4 – Store Equipment and Tools Properly

Unused tools and equipment should be stored out of employee work areas. Keeping a storage space nearby will encourage workers to use it, and return tools to where they belong. The storage space, if readily useable, is designed in such a way where it can be used without stretching too far or lifting heavy loads. Storage areas should not have an accumulation of materials that present hazards for tripping, fire, explosion or pests.

#5 – Personal Protective Equipment Use

It is important to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when cleaning up spills or other materials. Wear basic PPE – such as closed-toe shoes and safety glasses – while performing housekeeping. Determine what type of PPE to wear, based on the potential risks. Regularly inspect, clean and fix tools. Remove any damaged tools from the work area. This goes back to tip #1 – clearing clutter. If a tool is worn-out – get rid of it.

#6 – Preventing Falling Objects

Place heavy objects on lower shelves, and keep equipment away from the edges of benches and tables. Also, refrain from stacking objects in areas where workers walk, including aisles. Stack boxes and materials straight up and down to keep them from falling.

Keep layout in mind so workers are not exposed to hazards as they walk through areas.

#7 – Eliminate Fire Hazards

Employees are responsible for keeping unnecessary combustible materials from accumulating in the work area.

- Keep combustible materials in the work area only in amounts needed for the job. When they are unneeded, move them to an assigned safe storage area.
- Store quick-burning, flammable materials in designated locations away from ignition sources.
- Avoid contaminating clothes with flammable liquids. Change clothes if contamination occurs.
- Keep passageways and exits free of obstructions.
- Tanks specifically designed for cleaning parts should be changed often to avoid contamination of other chemicals that may have dissolved from parts that have been cleaned.

References:

MySafetyPoint Technical Bulletin

www.MySafetyPoint.com

National Safety Council

<https://www.nsc.org/>

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