CrewSigned

Housekeeping Toolbox Talk

5-minute read-aloud · Last reviewed November 24, 2026

Housekeeping sounds like a chore, not a safety topic. But look at what hurts people on a job like ours: tripping over scrap, slipping on a spill, stepping on a nail, getting hit by something that fell off a cluttered shelf, or a fire that started in a pile of trash. A messy site sets all of those up. A clean site takes most of them away.

The rule on construction sites is simple. Scrap lumber with nails sticking out and other debris has to be kept clear of work areas, walkways and stairs, and around buildings. Combustible scrap has to be hauled away regularly while the work goes on, not just at the end of the job. Oily rags and flammable waste go in covered containers, and those get emptied too.

Clean as you go. It is faster to drop offcuts in a bin as you cut than to pick up a whole floor at five o'clock. Bend over or pull nails out of boards before they hit the pile. Put tools back where they belong when you are done with them, not on the floor or the edge of a scaffold where they can get kicked off.

Keep the paths open. Walkways, stairs, ladders and exits need to stay clear at all times. Do not stage material in an exit route, even for a few minutes. Run cords and hoses along walls or overhead, and coil them up when they are not in use.

Spills get handled right away. Wipe up water, oil or hydraulic fluid when it happens. If you cannot clean it up yourself, block it off, mark it and tell someone. Floors should stay clean and as dry as we can keep them.

Stack material so it cannot fall. Keep it level, cross-tie it if it is high, put the heaviest items low, and keep stacks away from edges and openings.

Housekeeping is everyone's job, not just the laborer's. If you made the mess, clean it up. If you see a mess that someone else left, deal with it or tell me. When a site looks cared for, people work more carefully on it.

Discussion questions

1. What is the messiest spot on this site right now, and what would it take to clear it today?
2. Where does scrap pile up because there is no bin close enough?
3. What is one cleanup task we should add to the end of every shift?

OSHA standard

29 CFR 1926.25, Housekeeping
https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.25

SOURCES

29 CFR 1910.22, Walking-working surfaces general requirements: https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.22
OSHA Walking-Working Surfaces and Fall Protection rule: https://www.osha.gov/walking-working-surfaces
OSHA Fire Safety: https://www.osha.gov/fire-safety

This talk does not replace training that an OSHA standard requires. Scripts are based on OSHA and NIOSH publications and rewritten in plain language.

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

TOPIC
Housekeeping Toolbox Talk

COMPANY

JOB / SITE

DATE

TIME

PRESENTER

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