

HOUSEKEEPING

GENERAL SUMMARY

Good housekeeping is everyone's job but someone in each work area should be primarily responsible for ensuring that the area is clean and orderly. Many accidents result from poor housekeeping: wet floors present slipping or electrocution hazards, clutter of combustible material presents a fire hazard, etc.

All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition. 29 CFR §1910.22(a)(1)

To facilitate cleaning, every floor, working place, and passageway shall be kept free from protruding nails, splinters, holes, or loose boards.
29 CFR §1910.22(a)(1)

A housekeeping check list follows this section. You should add items which are unique to your workplace. Make copies and use it frequently.

FIRE PREVENTION

Fires often result from poor housekeeping, such as allowing oily rags to accumulate. Even if poor housekeeping habits do not *cause* the fire, clutter may make a fire worse, or hamper efforts to control the fire.

Keep electrical boxes clear for a distance of at least 3'. Fire extinguishers and hoses for standpipe systems must be easily reached and the signs marking their location must not be covered. Exits and doors must be easily accessible; never stack pallets where egress is hindered. "Stray" unidentified cylinders (especially small ones) tend to accumulate in corners. Clear them out!

Periodically review your facility Emergency Action / Fire Prevention plan with all employees.

SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

No single Standard addresses these hazards exclusively. Inspect your facility to identify likely hazards. Workman's comp. records may be helpful in identifying where employees have been injured in the past.

Aisles and steps should be kept clean and dry. In areas exposed to ice or snow, non-skid surfacing and posting caution signs should be considered.

Pay attention to areas where welding cable and hose is stored and cut. Someone should be made responsible for ensuring that these areas are frequently inspected and kept orderly.

Floors must be maintained in a clean and, so far as possible, dry condition. Where wet processes are used, such as hydrotesting and acetylene generation, maintain adequate drainage. For other areas, also consider providing grating, mats, etc. OSHA requires a dry standing place whenever practical. (A dry area is essential when working with electrical apparatus!)

AISLES

Reference: 29 CFR §1910.22

Permanent aisles and passageways must be appropriately marked. "Appropriate" is not defined and may depend upon the area and circumstances. Signs, marking cones and paint striping are examples of marking.

Where mechanical handling equipment (e.g., forklift) is used, sufficient clearance must be maintained to ensure no obstruction which may create a hazard. Pay particular attention to loading docks and areas where turns must be made. Inspect the work area for "blind spots." Consider installing pedestrian mirrors, where necessary.

EXITS

Reference: 29 CFR §1910.36

Exits must be so arranged and maintained as to provide unobstructed egress from all parts of the building. **No lock, fastening, or blockage which would prevent free escape from inside may be installed.**

Exits (or ways to reach exits, if not apparent) must be clearly marked. If a non-exit passageway is likely to be mistaken for an exit, it must be marked also (e.g., "RESTROOM," "STOREROOM," "NOT AN EXIT," etc.)

GROUNDS

Weeds should be cut at least 15 feet surrounding the property. Brush fires on adjacent property can cause a serious fire in a distributorship -- especially in summer when propane tends to vent. Keep weeds clear of lime ponds, propane and propylene operations by using an approved herbicide.

LADDERS

Reference: 29 CFR §1910.25 (Portable wood ladders); 29 CFR §1910.26 (Portable metal ladders).

Requirements differ between wooden and metal ladders. In general, standards require ladders to be maintained in a sound condition, free from slippery substances. Make-shift repairs (e.g., fastening ladders together) or using ladders for other than their intended purpose (e.g., brace or skid) is not allowed. Ladders should be inspected regularly for defects and to insure safety feet are installed.

Stepladders longer than 20' should not be used. Section ladders up to 36' must overlap sections by at least 3'. The general rule for proper angle is to set the ladder from the vertical wall a distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ the working length of the ladder. If used to gain access to a rooftop, the ladder should extend at least 3 feet above the rooftop, eave, or gutter. Train employees to always inspect the area prior to placing a ladder; consider the surface and traffic areas such as doorways.

ELECTRICAL EXTENSION CORDS

Extension cords, or "drop cords" may not be used as permanent wiring. Cords may not extend through holes in walls, windows, etc. All repairs must be made using approved electrical apparatus; taped splices are not allowed.

Insure that employees inspect extension cords prior to each use.

HOUSEKEEPING CHECKLIST

This checklist is a sample. You will need to amend it to suit your operation.

Date: _____ Inspected by: _____

	<u>Needs</u>	
<u>O.K.</u>	<u>Attention</u>	

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Permanent aisles marked. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Aisles free of clutter. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Access to stairways clear. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electrical boxes & outlets easily located and accessible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire extinguishers & signs easily located and accessible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slippery spots on floor. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Containers, pallets, etc., stored neatly and stacked without leaning. (i.e., are containers secure against toppling?) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Exit doors unlocked, unblocked, and marked. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Property clean and free of weeds. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Adequate lighting in work areas. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lunch areas clean. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Restrooms clean. |

Work areas clean. Identify work areas (e.g., repair, fill plant, dock):

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |