

TOOLBOX TALK • HARD & SOFT SERVICES

Workplace housekeeping: Small things matter.

Use this talk in the first 5 minutes of your shift: five minutes of training, for zero accidents.

Clean it. Report it. Stop the work.

Why workplace housekeeping matters

Small details create serious risks when crews ignore them. An unattended spill, an item in a walkway, or a damaged tool nobody reports can quickly lead to an injury or property damage.

Preventing incidents takes three simple actions: maintain good housekeeping, report hazards promptly, and use Stop Work Authority whenever a task or condition is unsafe. Acting early protects your coworkers and keeps small problems from becoming serious incidents.

THREE MESSAGES FOR YOUR CREW

01

Housekeeping: Remove hazards.

Clean spills immediately, keep walkways and exits clear, store tools and chemicals correctly, and remove clutter. OSHA's walking-working surfaces standard requires work areas to be clean, orderly and sanitary.

02

Hazard reporting: Speak up.

Report unsafe conditions, damaged equipment, leaks, unlabeled chemicals and near misses promptly so your supervisor can correct them.

03

Stop Work Authority: Take action.

Pause the job when conditions are unsafe or controls are missing. Notify your supervisor, address the hazard, and resume only when work can continue safely.

Workplace housekeeping on your shift

HARD SERVICES

For technicians

- Return tools, parts and fasteners to the cart or kit when the job is done. Loose items in mechanical rooms and on rooftops become trip hazards and debris.
- Route hoses, gauge lines and extension cords out of walkways, and pick them up before you leave the area.
- Make housekeeping part of closing out every work order. Report oil, water or refrigerant leaks, damaged guards and missing labels as soon as you find them.
- Stop the work if lockout/tagout is incomplete, a ladder is damaged, or no one has secured the area.

SOFT SERVICES

For custodial crews

- Clean spills right away and place wet floor signs before you mop, not after.
- Keep carts, cords and trash bags out of exits, hallways and doorways.
- Keep every chemical in a labeled container, and close supply closets when you walk away.
- Report broken equipment, loose tiles, leaks and lighting outages to your supervisor.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Q1** Which hazards do we report immediately, and who receives the report?
- Q2** When do we use Stop Work Authority?
- Q3** What small housekeeping issue could cause an incident in our work area?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Run a quick housekeeping check. Inspect your work area, correct one housekeeping issue, report one unresolved hazard, and stop any task you cannot perform safely.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Clean it, report it, or stop the work before a hazard becomes an incident. Good housekeeping is a habit you practice every shift, not a cleanup day.

Small things matter.

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SAFETY PROGRAM

5 minutes of training for 0 accidents