

# Safer Futures Today

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## TOOL BOX TALK: HOUSEKEEPING

Some people think it's a waste of time. But if you spend just a few minutes picking up, you might keep someone from slipping or tripping. You could prevent an injury that keeps them off work for weeks or even months. Five minutes to save months off work—it's a good investment. And next time, it could be **you** who gets hurt.

Housekeeping is everyone's job—every trade, every worker, and every supervisor. And it's a job you should do every day—not just once a week or when a project is over. The first rule is to do your work neatly in the first place, and clean up after yourself. Good housekeeping does more than prevent injuries—it can save you time, and it can keep your tools from being lost, damaged, or destroyed.

### What can you do to prevent slips, trips, and falls?

- If you see a mess, take care of it. Don't wait for someone else to clean it up. Pick up anything you see lying around, especially if it could trip someone or fall.
- If you find someone's tools or equipment around, move them out of the way. Put them somewhere safe, but visible.
- Immediately clear scrap and debris from walkways, passageways, stairs, scaffolds, and around floor openings.
- Make sure the ground is level and well-graded within six feet of buildings.
- Keep storage areas and walkways free of holes and obstructions.
- Clean up spills of grease, oil, or other liquids at once. If it's not possible, cover them with sand or some other absorbent material until they can be cleaned up. Someone might slip.
- Coil up extension cords, lines, welding leads, hoses, etc. when not in use.
- Make sure there's adequate lighting. If a light is out, report it. Replace it immediately if you can.
- Watch the weather closely and monitor both interior and exterior walkways.
- Keep exit paths free from obstruction.

Remember, our actions can have a significant impact on others. A clean and orderly workplace shows you take pride in your work and makes everyone's work environment more pleasant.



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