



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

# Weekly Safety Meeting

## Housekeeping in the Construction Industry

Companies that hold general housekeeping of work areas to a high standard usually have a better safety culture than those companies that do not. Housekeeping is an important part of a robust safety program.

Poor housekeeping promotes inefficiency and leads to injuries and property loss.

Housekeeping is everyone's job – every trade, every worker, and every supervisor. Good housekeeping does more than prevent injuries – it can save you time, and it can keep your tools from being lost, damaged, or destroyed.

Spending just 5 minutes picking up debris could prevent an injury that keeps a co-employee, or yourself, off work for weeks or even months.

Construction sites can be busy and hectic with many workers and multiple contractors carrying on different yet simultaneous operations. What would happen if these groups never cleaned up after themselves? Trash and debris would pile up to become one large hazardous environment.

### Results of Poor Housekeeping Practices:

- Injuries, when employees trip, fall, strike, or are struck by out-of-place objects;
- Injuries from using improper tools because the correct tool can't be found;
- Lowered production because of the time spent maneuvering over and around someone else's mess, and time spent looking for proper tools and materials;
- Time spent investigating and reporting accidents that could have been avoided;
- Fires due to improper storage and disposal of flammable or combustible materials and wastes;
- Substandard quality of finished products because of production schedule delays, damaged or defective finishes, ill-equipped employees, etc.;
- Lack of future work due to a reputation for poor quality; and
- "Wall-to-wall" OSHA inspections due to the poor "first impression" of the compliance officer.

## General Housekeeping Rules to Remember:

### Housekeeping is everyone's responsibility!

- Clean up after yourself.
  - Pick up trash and debris and dispose of it properly.
  - Keep your work area clean throughout the day, minimizing the time needed to clean a larger mess at the end of the day.
- Dispose of combustibles and flammables properly.
  - If improperly discarded, they will increase the potential for a fire.
- Remove protruding nails and other sharp objects or hammer them flat to prevent someone from being injured by them.
- Stack materials and supplies in an orderly manner and secure them so they won't topple.
- Report all slips, trips and falls, with or without injury, so the hazard can be corrected.
- Remove any cords or cables in walking areas.
- Organize cables under desks.

### Remember:

Good housekeeping can have a significant impact on others and makes it easier for everyone to perform their work safely. We are all dependent on each other for safety. It's up to each of us to keep our worksite clean and orderly to make the entire site a safer place to work.

**A CLEANER PLACE IS A SAFER PLACE!!**

