

# MSU - Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
EXTENSION

Housekeeping

The dreaded word of “housekeeping” brings to mind scrubbing toilets, dusting and mopping floors at home ... yuck! But at work “housekeeping” means something a little different. Housekeeping is crucial to workplaces safety. It can help prevent injuries, improve productivity and morale, or even help prevent potential problems from non-compliance.

All workers should participate in housekeeping, especially in terms of keeping their own work areas tidy. Supervisors need to encourage reporting safety hazards, repairs needed, or items for disposal found while doing workplace housekeeping.

## Tips for Effective Housekeeping:

Slips, trips and falls are a leading cause of injuries and days away from work. The Walking-Working Surfaces Standard (1910.22(a)) states that all workplaces should be “kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.”

- **Floors should be clean and dry.**
  - If you spill coffee in the hallway, stop to wipe it up. If you need to mop a large area (entrance or hallway) place a sign warning others of the wet floor.
  - Equipment leaking oil or mess created from making a repair - clean it up.
  - Use the right cleaning product. Oils and grease take more than a rag & water; be careful not to spread slipperiness around, rather than getting it up and off the floor.
- **Drainage should be present where wet processes are used.**
  - If drains are clogged and allowing standing water, get them fixed.
- **Keep walk ways and exits clear of items.**
- Replace worn, ripped or damage flooring.
- Consider installing anti-slip flooring in areas that can't always be cleaned.
- Ensure floor mats don't slip or have curled up corners.

## Avoid tracking materials -

- Work area mats should be kept clean. This may even help prevent the spread of hazardous materials to other work areas or keep from tracking it home.
- Separate cleaning protocols may be needed for different areas to prevent cross-contamination.
- If the materials are toxic, industrial hygiene testing, uniforms and showering facilities might be needed. Employees who work with toxic materials should not wear their work clothes home.

## Clear clutter -

- Allow enough area for proper work station setup. This will help be more ergonomic or comfortable, and effective for work productivity.
- Everything should have a place – organize.
- Return tools and other materials to their designated place after using them.
- Keep aisles, stairways, emergency exits, electrical panels and mechanical rooms clear of clutter. These areas cannot be used for storage.
- Dispose of things no longer useable – unrepairable equipment, out dated chemicals, empty containers, & trash.

## Clean, inspect, and make needed repairs to your...

- Personal protective equipment
- Tools and equipment
- Vehicles

Housekeeping should be more than a one-time initiative. The amount of debris or contaminants the workplace creates can help determine the frequency of housekeeping.

Sources:

<http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/12470-tips-for-effective-workplace-housekeeping>

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