



Toolbox Talks

Housekeeping



According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in recent years there are more than 800 injuries annually involving floors, walkways, and ground surfaces. OSHA issues hundreds of citations to companies for violations of poor housekeeping and OSHA lists housekeeping on their top 100 most frequently cited list. Workers should do their part to help avoid and prevent injuries and incidents by practicing good housekeeping on every job and at every worksite.

OSHA Standard 1926.25(a) says that during the course of construction, alteration, or repairs, form and scrap lumber with protruding nails, and all other debris, shall be kept cleared from work areas, passageways, and stairs, in and around buildings or other structures.

OSHA Standard 1926.252(a) says that whenever materials are dropped more than 20 feet to any point lying outside the exterior walls of the building, an enclosed chute of wood, or equivalent material, shall be used. See also OSHA Standard 1926.252(b) regarding debris dropped through holes in the floor without the use of chutes.

Remember these tips to improve housekeeping and worker safety:

- Always remove or hammer down nails from scrap lumber and other debris.
- During construction separate waste or scrap materials from the immediate work area to avoid creating trip and slip hazards.
- Keep areas clear as the work progresses.
- Store pipe, conduit, rebar, and other rolling materials away from aisles and walkways to avoid creating trip hazards.
- Use designated waste bins, recycle bins, and metal scrap containers.
- When disposing of waste or materials on a multistory construction site use chutes or designated drop-off zones to avoid possible fall hazards.

