

Neatness Does Count

Good housekeeping is at least as essential in the workplace as it is in your own home. When your workspace is clean, orderly, and free of obstructions, you can get the job done safely and properly. A mess work area, on the other hand, promotes accidents because it hides hazards. These hidden hazards can cause you and others, illness, and injury. Don't accept the sight of paper, debris, and spills as a normal working condition. If you consider this as normal, you may begin to think of worse dangers as acceptable as well.

Effective housekeeping takes an ongoing effort, not just hit-and-miss attempts to clean up once in a while. Periodic cleanups aren't enough to reduce workplace accident rates. Don't begin a drive to clean up and then let things slide after a week or two. Set your work area in order and *keep* it that way. A lasting result is the only meaningful one.

While we are not expected to clean up for others, unless that is the job we have been hired for, as adults we can help clean up after ourselves and keep our own work areas neat and in order. That is an understood part of every job description (On the other hand, it would not be very adult to notice a hazardous situation and do nothing just because it wasn't within our area.)

Here are some specifics to be mindful of:

Keep the floor, and work area, around you clean and clear of waste. If your job is one in which debris is created, you can attend to the immediate floor area every once in a while as you work.

Keep your workstation cleared of personal items such as clothing and lunch boxes. These should be stacked neatly in a locker or an assigned storage spot.