



# General Housekeeping

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the [Occupational Safety web page](#).

## General Information

Every year, housekeeping is a leading concern identified on safety inspections conducted by EH&S. Keeping a tidy and organized workplace is not only safer, but also increases efficiency for all users.

## Common housekeeping concerns

- Needles, scalpels, or glass in the garbage
- Items blocking fire extinguishers or electrical panels
- Restricted or blocked evacuation routes, should be at least 36" wide
- Items stacked too high blocking sprinklers, 18" of clearance is required
- Outdated or incomplete contact information
- Food or drink in a lab/shop that contains potentially hazardous materials
- Signage that is missing, damaged, or inaccurate
- Cluttered workplaces that do not allow natural movement for tasks

*Can you identify any of the above items in your workplace?*

## Why does it matter?

In the event of an emergency, every second matters. A workplace where occupants can easily exit and access safety equipment (fire extinguishers, electrical shutoffs, eyewash stations, etc.) can prevent an incident or significantly reduce its impact. Keeping signage and emergency contact information updated allows for the most efficient emergency response.



## What can you do?

- Follow training and procedures put in place by the workplace supervisor
- Put things away when you are finished or at the end of the day
- Hold yourself and coworkers accountable
  - It is easier to maintain an organized space when everyone contributes

**Discussion Date:**

**Supervisor:**

**Participants:**

Photo Source: [SafetySign.com](#)