

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



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**Messy Workplaces are Never Safe**



During planting and harvesting season the tasks of maintaining a clean area is harder and takes a little more effort. But if the thought and pride are there, cleaning can get done.

I'll bet if we were getting a "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" award with some type of gratuity with it, a will to maintain good cleaning would happen. The same type of pride should be evident without any awards.

Whether it's an office, warehouse, farm maintenance shops or other types of maintenance facilities, there are many reasons why we should try to stay as clean and organized as possible. Following are some examples:

- Injury or death resulting from a trip or fall. Statistics show that slips, trips and falls are one of the leading causes of injury or death in the agriculture industry.
- Injury or death from having been struck with an out-of-place object.
- Injury or death in a fire caused by improper storage or non-disposal of materials or even tools that aren't replaced to their rightful location in the area.
- Reduced productivity because of time spent getting around tools; or other messes left by other employees; or tools not being returned to their rightful place, which results in delays on the project.

You know, a clean workplace is no guarantee that it is totally safe, but a dirty, disorganized one is definitely a haven for an accident. Good housekeeping, like any type of work project, just doesn't happen by itself. There has to be a program in place that enables it to happen by follow-up from the supervision. Standards for the program should be set with all employees involved to be sure that all are acceptable and workable.

Sometimes housekeeping programs are installed after a brush with an accident or near accident. I read of an example that happened in a welding shop where a fire started in a garbage can and spread. The can was located beneath cutting torch hoses. The fire spread and caught the hoses on fire. Luckily, the acetylene tank regulator was shut off.

Although it burned the hoses that were filled with acetylene gas, it didn't get out of hand or build to a major problem. Obviously, there was a great deal of smoke. After this incident, the owner installed a policy of no trash cans in the welding shop.

Like any type of machine shop, a lot of cutting, welding, and grinding went on, so they changed to have all the garbage cans placed behind doors or barriers to reduce the possibility of a fire. Some barrels were stenciled to show that they were itemized "For Metal Only."

Good housekeeping or maintaining a clean shop or workplace can be a morale booster for all employees.

With a good program in line to follow, pride will eventually get instilled in all employees, and they will all like to see an orderly and clean work area. It would only take a few visitors or upper management trips to make positive comments about the clean shop, and everyone would take an interest in their personal hygiene of their work areas.

#### **TIPS FOR GOOD HOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES:**

- Keep shop and office areas clean, clear of clutter and organized.
- Maintain clear aisles and walkways and keep exits and entrances free of obstruction.
- Keep floors dry and in good repair.
- Set up a schedule for regular maintenance of high profile areas where dirt, debris and dust are prevalent.
- Keep tools and parts organized for easy access. It improves the time cycle of a project.
- Use proper waste containers.
- Keep sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers and fire alarms free with easy access.
- Keep oil spills and leaks cleaned up to prevent the chance of a slip or fall.
- Keep sufficient and proper lighting in all work areas.
- Maintain or repair defective tools and equipment.

***When you're done messin' up,  
Go back and sweep it up  
(The Mess)***

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**WIPE IT UP - AVOID A SLIP  
UP!!**