

Housekeeping and Hygiene

What does it mean?

Every workplace is safer when it is kept **clean and sanitary**. Your workers spend many hours each day at the company where they have to drink water, eat their meals, and use the toilet facilities. It is important that company premises are kept clean enough so workers and therefore your business stay healthy and successful.

Housekeeping and workplace hygiene means providing adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities that are regularly cleaned and maintained so they do not pose a health and safety risk to employees.

Workers need to have potable drinking water that is safe to drink, sanitary toilet facilities, safe food prepared in sanitary kitchens and served in clean canteens, and a work environment that is otherwise kept hygienic.

Performing **regular housekeeping** and maintenance helps you identify potential issues and take preventative action before problems develop. Good housekeeping practices also help you control problems by eliminating tripping hazards, making sure floors are never slippery and keeping exit routes clear.

A socially responsible company makes sure that none of its facilities and practices create a situation where workers are at risk due to poor housekeeping and workplace hygiene.

This section will help you check whether there a **risk** of not meeting these standards in your current business operations and, if so, how to put **controls** in place to make sure your housekeeping and workplace hygiene needs are understood and controlled.

Having an effective housekeeping and hygiene program helps you control the chemical, physical, and biological sources of worker illness, injury, and discomfort in the workplace.

Keeping your company and company grounds clean can reduce the risk of disease, insect infestation, food and water-borne illness, and other threats to worker health and your business.



Benefits

Why should you do it?

Maintaining good workplace housekeeping and hygiene will help you meet legal requirements, avoid penalties, protect your workers' health and safety and your business assets, and meet your customers' requirements.

There can also be **business benefits**, such as:

- a) Improved workplace efficiency
- b) Less time and productivity lost due to worker illness
- c) Decrease in workplace accidents and associated costs
- d) Improved company image

Requirements

What do you need to do?

ETI Base Code Provision 3

3.1 A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided, bearing in mind the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards. Adequate steps shall be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.



3.3 Access to clean toilet facilities and to potable water, and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for food storage shall be provided.

Relevant ILO Conventions

C120 Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964

C155 Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981

C161 Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985

Other International Standards and Guidelines

ILO R120 Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Recommendation, 1964

ILO R164 Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981

The right to water and sanitation is implicitly included in Article 11.1 of the **International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights**, recognising “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions”.



Achieving and Maintaining Standards

How do you do it?

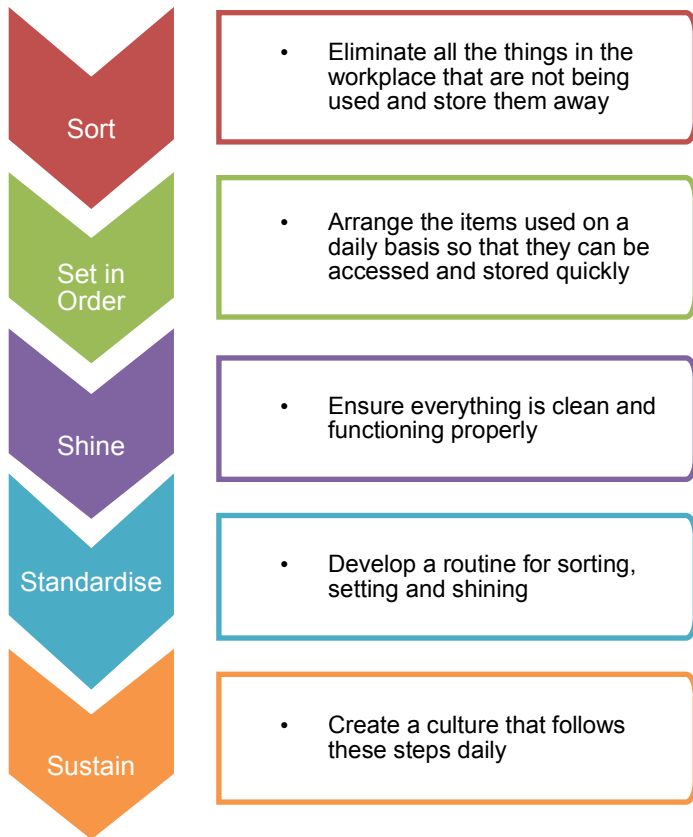
You can best meet standards by using a **systems approach**. In other words, you add **controls** to the processes you already use to run your business. And you make sure your **policies** and **procedures** are designed to prevent typical problems such as:

- Slips, trips and falls from wet, oily or cluttered working and walking surfaces.
- Blocked or hard-to-access exit facilities as a result of improper storage in aisles, hallways and staircases.
- Potable water not available at all times for workers.
- Worker illness from contaminated drinking water.
- Inadequate number of toilet facilities for workers.
- Unsanitary washing and toilet facilities.
- Unsanitary food storage and preparation facilities, leading to food-borne illness.
- Infestations of insects or rodents in food storage and living areas.

It is important that you also regularly **monitor** your processes and controls to make sure they are working.

5S

'Making Housekeeping a Habit'



Policies

(rules)

Your company policies on housekeeping and hygiene should include the following:

- Company commitment to maintaining a clean and sanitary work environment.
- Commitment to provide an adequate number of sanitary and properly maintained toilet facilities.
- Commitment that workers will be provided with unrestricted, 24x7 access to potable drinking water.
- Commitment that food preparation, eating, and serving areas will be kept clean and sanitary.
- Commitment to ensure that exit aisles and stairwells are never used for temporary or permanent storage of any materials, products or waste.

- Statement that all working and walking surfaces will be kept free of slipping and tripping hazards such as water and oil leaks, dust and debris.

Procedures

(practices)

You should **assign a responsible person** (or department) to make sure your policies are carried out. This includes:

- Communicating your policies to all managers, supervisors and workers.
- Meeting regularly with managers and supervisors responsible for production and facilities maintenance to oversee implementation.
- Monitoring and reporting all complaints and management responses related to housekeeping and sanitation.
- Performing an annual review of the implementation status of your housekeeping and sanitation policies and procedures.

Your facility housekeeping and sanitation **procedures** should include:

- Ways to track and understand laws and regulations on housekeeping and hygiene.
- Ensuring an adequate number of toilets for both male and female workers, based on the number of workers and local regulatory requirements.
- A regular maintenance program for toilet facilities to ensure that they are:
 - Kept clean and sanitary
 - Working properly
 - Separated by gender
 - Sufficiently private
 - Able to meet cultural norms (like provision of wash facilities) if needed for religious observances
- Ensuring that hand washing facilities are provided for all toilet facilities, in food preparation and eating areas, and all other

areas where workers may touch hazardous or infectious substances.

- ☑ A program to provide clean drinking water that is:
 - Freely accessible in all working and eating areas and in worker accommodation at all times.
 - Sufficient for the size of the workforce
 - Tested regularly to make sure it is potable
- ☑ Ensuring that food preparation, storage, and canteen facilities are kept clean and sanitary. This means:
 - Food storage (food lockers, refrigerators and freezers) must be in compliance with local law, and food must always be kept in a way that prevents spoilage or illness
 - Food preparation areas are kept clean and hygienic
 - Eating areas are kept clean and hygienic
 - Keeping these free of rodents and insects
- ☑ Cooks and other food handling and preparation staff must be medically certified according to local law.
- ☑ A program of regular housekeeping, such as using '5S' (best suited to factory settings), to ensure that floors, sidewalks and all other walking and working surfaces are kept free of:
 - Spills and leaks that result in slips and falls
 - Debris and improperly stored tools and materials that can cause tripping and falling
- ☑ Regular inspection and housekeeping of all aisles, hallways and stairwells to make sure workers can exit the facility quickly and safely in an emergency.
- ☑ A program of regular cleaning and disinfection to prevent other potential health problems such as dust, mould, and mildew.
- ☑ A process to keep the facility and grounds free from insect or animal infestation (for example, making sure there is no standing water that could be a breeding ground for insects that spread disease).
- ☑ A program to properly segregate and dispose of food and sanitary waste.

Best Practice

Routine Housekeeping

As part of the company's overall housekeeping program, make all workers responsible for basic housekeeping of their work area.

At the end of every shift, they should make sure tools are put away, workstations are not cluttered, scrap material is cleaned up, rubbish is thrown away properly and dust is swept up.

Assigning these basic tasks to all company employees will go a long way toward keeping your company cleaner and safer.

Good Housekeeping Protects Occupational Health and Safety

Having a good housekeeping plan in place doesn't only keep the company clean, but it will help you meet requirements for many areas of occupational health and safety. For example:

- ✓ ***Machinery and Site Vehicles*** - keeping machines clean means they are less likely to break down or create a hazard.
- ✓ ***Hazardous Materials*** - disposing of used chemical containers safely and promptly reduces risks to workers and the environment.
- ✓ ***Worker Health*** - keeping company grounds free from standing water protects against insect infestation and illness.
- ✓ ***Emergency and Fire Safety*** - reducing clutter at workstations helps keep exit routes clear.

See the other chapters in this workbook for further details. A housekeeping and hygiene program is a key component of good occupational health management at any company.



Communication and Training

You can use the following methods to make sure your employees are aware of your housekeeping policies and procedures:

- ☑ Provide training programs for new managers and supervisors, and newly hired workers on your company's policies and procedures on housekeeping and hygiene.
- ☑ Display company policies and any laws relating to housekeeping and hygiene in a language that workers understand.
- ☑ Provide relevant information to employees, such as worker handbooks or supervisor training material. This information should explain the factory rules and procedures on housekeeping and hygiene, and include feedback and grievance processes available to employees.
- ☑ Post housekeeping responsibilities in each work area/workstation.
- ☑ Train all workers who are involved with equipment or materials that require special hygiene controls to perform these jobs safely, such as facilities maintenance employees, cooks and food handlers.

Documentation and Records

Meeting standards requires proper documentation. You will need to keep the following on file on your company premises:

- ☑ Inspection records for aisles, corridors and all exit facilities that verify they are maintained free of obstructions or storage that could prevent workers from exiting safely in an emergency.
- ☑ Records of maintenance for toilet facilities demonstrating that company housekeeping and hygiene requirements are checked and consistently met.
- ☑ Records of drinking water testing for chemical and biological contaminants to make sure it is safe to drink.
- ☑ Records demonstrating that food preparation, storage, and eating area housekeeping and hygiene requirements are checked and consistently met.
- ☑ Records showing that food handling and preparation workers are medically certified if legally required.
- ☑ Waste handling, segregation, and disposal records.
- ☑ Written records to show that supervisor and worker training on housekeeping and hygiene has been completed, including for general training orientation for all worker and training for specific jobs.



Monitoring

You will need to check if your housekeeping and hygiene policies are being followed and that the controls to make sure your company is meeting code and legal requirements are effective.

Tips:

- 1. Monitor and report on trends** to identify actual and potential problems, including:
 - Regularly review worker feedback related to the administration of your company's housekeeping and hygiene policies.
 - Establish and monitor key performance indicators for your housekeeping and hygiene procedures so that you can measure their effectiveness on a continuous basis.
 - Set goals and objectives for meeting the company's housekeeping requirements. For example, goals might be that 'toilet facilities are always stocked with hand soap' or 'workstations are swept for dust daily, and vacuumed weekly.' Track if the company is meeting goals and modify systems if goals are not met.
 - Regularly review and revise policies and procedures to keep them relevant and up-to-date.
- 2. Investigate problems and analyse why they occurred.** Where data indicates the existence of non-conformities with your company's housekeeping and hygiene policies and customer code(s) of conduct, the company should investigate these conditions to determine their **causes** and what can be done to address them.
 - Conduct regular assessments of the housekeeping and hygiene hazards in all facility areas and make sure procedures are effectively protecting workers, or if additional procedures are needed.
 - Regularly inspect toilets, drinking water and food preparation, storage, and eating facilities
- 3. Work with other departments to identify reasonable solutions.** Take care to develop solutions so that the problem does not recur and the solution itself does not create other problems.
 - Carefully investigate worker feedback and grievances related to housekeeping and hygiene.
 - Analyse on a regular basis any suggestions from worker meetings and use the results to adjust company policies and procedures.
 - Integrate good housekeeping and hygiene practices into job descriptions. Make general and job-specific housekeeping practices, like keeping workstations clean, part of each worker's responsibility.
 - Integrate oversight of good housekeeping and hygiene practices into the job descriptions of supervisors and managers.

to make sure your housekeeping policies are followed and control procedures implemented.

Common Questions

What is the best way to ensure that business conditions are generally kept clean and hygienic?

You have to employ a variety of methods:

- Create a list of housekeeping and hygiene requirements that are needed to meet legal, code, and customer requirements.
- Develop a regular maintenance plan.
- Prioritise areas for regular monitoring and checks. For example, toilets may need to be cleaned daily and checked to make sure they are stocked with soap.
- Once the plan is created, a manager or supervisor, or a group of the same, should be designated and required to monitor conditions on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis, according to requirements.

What are some measures I can take to make sure that workers keep their general work area clean?

Accidents and injuries can occur as a result of worker indifference to workplace cleanliness and hygiene. To encourage workers to take part in regular cleaning and

maintenance of their work areas, train them such that they understand the health and safety risks of failing to do so.

Prominently post posters and instructions about how workers can help keep the company clean. Centrally located bulletin boards can also include posted reminders of cleaning needs, perhaps on a regular, rotational basis. Morning production meetings present good opportunities to remind workers of workplace hygiene needs and rules as well.

In a factory setting, implementing a formal system, such as 5S, can make housekeeping a regular part of production management and a formal part of every worker's job.

Most workers are very eager to avoid accidents, injuries, or illness and should be willing partners to keep things clean, if made aware of what is at stake.

Common audit non-compliances from the Sedex database

- *Kitchens not sanitary.*
- *Dust build-up on machines and floors.*
- *Worker slips due to wet or damp flooring.*
- *Drinking water that is unsafe to drink.*
- *Toilet facilities that are not stocked with hand soap or toilet paper.*
- *Standing water on factory grounds.*

Sedex provides a document with suggested possible corrective actions following a SMETA audit. This is available to Sedex members only in the Sedex Members Resources section:

[Sedex Corrective Action Guidance](#)

Case Study

Housekeeping and Hygiene: Cleanliness and Orderliness

Occupational Health & Safety is required to prevent injuries and diseases related to work, and to protect the physical and mental health of employees.

Famar takes a strict approach to Health & Safety through continuous training and obligatory personal protective equipment (PPE) use. The site produces liquid and semi-liquid pharmaceutical products and so proper standards are vital.

"In the past some of the housekeeping staff did not follow the safety instructions that were provided (use of yellow cones) in such way to protect employees from slipping due to the wet surfaces. Issues of chemical cleaning materials management, storage and proper labelling were also important to address," says Chris Messologitis, Corporate HSE Manager, Greek Operations, Famar.

All employees and contract cleaning staff were trained in the new CLP labelling and chemical management and the appropriate PPE were provided in accordance to the legislation requirements. In a recent audit by customer Perrigo, Famar was found to have high levels of cleanliness and tidiness. All fire equipment, eye wash stations and evacuation points were properly placed and signposted. PPE was provided and first aid kits were available, and the facility had established a system where spill kits materials were placed near exits, to enable quick collection for use in the outside area.

Case Study (continued)

There was controlled access to the flammable chemicals warehouse, separate from the main production site. Famar had also implemented extra support for equipment in case of earthquakes. Management had detailed risk assessments for all processes and an action plan was being continuously developed to improve processes relating to HR management and employees' Health & Safety.

A document is in place and Famar employees report any hazards they observe or cases where they felt they might have had an injury. From the reporting, an improvement action plan is implemented. The 'no injuries' objective is reported and posted through the use of a 'red-amber-green' communication system highlighting recent daily hazard at the site.

"A continuous communication on sharing incidents from other sites, the employees' commitment to change their work behaviour and on the job training, are some of the actions that makes the difference and improvements to minimise incidents at workplace."

"Perrigo UK recognises Famar as an example of a Best Practise Supplier with regards to standards. The recent SMETA audit demonstrates commitment and enthusiasm in this respect, specifically with regard to Health & Safety," says Danielle Coletta, CSR Project Manager, Perrigo UK.

Famar S.A is one of Europe's leading providers of contract manufacturing and development services to the pharmaceutical and health and beauty industry. To find out more about Famar, visit <http://www.famar.gr>

Sedex is always looking for new case studies. If you have a best practice example case study that you would like to be featured then please send it to emily.pearce@sedexglobal.com

Resources and Guidance

The following organisations, websites and documents provide additional information on housekeeping and hygiene:

- ☑ Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) Best Practice Guidance:
<http://www.sedexglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/SMETA-Best-Practice-Guidance-updated-2011.pdf>
- ☑ SMETA Corrective Action Guidance:
<https://www.sedex.org.uk/sedex/go.asp?wsfedsession=0>
- ☑ International Labour Organization: <http://www.ilo.org>
- ☑ Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI): <http://www.eti.org>
 - ETI Base Code: <http://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/key-eti-resources/eti-base-code>
 - ETI Base Code Appendices: <http://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/membership-resources/eti-base-code-appendices>
- ☑ United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):
http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9714
- ☑ European Union Agency for Health and Safety at Work:
 - Factsheet 14 – Preventing Work-Related Slips Trips and Falls:
<http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/factsheets/14/view>
 - Biological agents: <http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/factsheets/41>

Signposts to Training

- ☑ UK Food Standards Agency: <http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2012/may/food-hygiene-videos>
- ☑ US Food and Drug Administration:
 - <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/FoodSafety/RetailFoodProtection/IndustryandRegulatoryAssistanceandTrainingResources/UCM088896.pdf>
 - <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/RetailFoodProtection/IndustryandRegulatoryAssistanceandTrainingResources/ucm124134.htm>
- ☑ ETI: <http://www.ethicaltrade.org/training>
- ☑ National Environmental Health Association – Food Safety Training:
<http://www.nehatraining.org/>

Key Terms

- **5S:** The name of a workplace organisation method that uses a list of five words that all start with the letter "S". The list describes how to organise a work space for efficiency and effectiveness by identifying and storing the items used, maintaining the area and items, and sustaining the new order. One goal of 5S is improved Health & Safety. Clear pathways between workbenches and storage racks can minimise accidents, as can properly swept floors.
- **Industrial Hygiene:** The anticipation, recognition, evaluation, and control of factors in the workplace that may cause illness, impaired health and well-being, or worker discomfort.
- **Housekeeping:** Maintaining upkeep and general cleanliness and sanitation at the company.
- **Potable Water:** Water that has been tested for dangerous and/or toxic chemicals such as lead or bacteria and has been certified to be safe for drinking.

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