Recordkeeping-Reporting Stats and Facts

DID YOU KNOW?

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, slips, trips and falls (STFs) were responsible for more than 308,000 non-fatal workplace injuries in 2012 (the most recent data available). STFs rank second it accidental deaths behind motor vehicle crashes.

Unfortunately, there is no way to 100% guarantee that injuries won't happen on your job site. The bad news is that accidents do happen from time to time.

But there *is* good news!

There are preventative measures that can be taken to decrease the risks of injuries and/or fatalities on the job.

Of course, there are many ways to increase safety, but one basic measure is to have an effective housekeeping plan. **Housekeeping** is defined by OSHA as the practice of maintaining a clean, clutter-free, organized work site that eliminates or greatly reduces the risk of a slip, trip or fall.

It may seem minute, but the consequences of neglecting work site housekeeping are not.

Your Business is Greatly Effected

For employers, it is costly not to invest time into putting together a plan. Injured workers lead to:

- An increase in spending to recruit and properly train temporary workers
- A decrease in efficiency
- A decrease in the number of days worked on the job site
- An increase in workers' compensation premiums

How To Create a Safer Work Environment Using a Housekeeping Plan

1. **Conduct an inspection at your work site to expose the possible trouble areas for slips, trips and falls.** Some common types of hazards leading to STFs are: inadequate lighting, electrical cables, unexpected placement of equipment, loose flooring, uneven walking surfaces. There are many more – and each list will differ from job site to job site.
2. **Create a plan for how to eliminate these potential hazards.** Strategize in order to envision what your work site would look like without those trouble areas. Then, devise your plan for how to achieve this! Again, this will look different for every work environment, but your plan could include things like: assigning cleaning responsibilities to specific employees, ensuring employees are wearing proper footwear on the job, making sure light switches are easy to locate, create extra storage space for cables and tools. Your list will be specific to your job site needs.
3. **Make this a part of your daily routine.** Housekeeping is not a "every so often" thing, nor is it a "whenever we think of it" thing. Housekeeping practices must be maintained and kept-up with in order to be effective.
4. **Employees must be trained in your housekeeping practices.** In order for your housekeeping plan to work, you and your employees must be on the same page. Mandatory training programs will allow workers to hear the end goal of your specific housekeeping plan. Each employee should understand his/her role in keeping the work site safe.

It's normal for these plans to evolve with your work site as it undergoes change. But, we promise you will not regret putting together a good housekeeping plan to stick to!

When creating a safer, more sanitary workplace, don't overlook the simple steps. Relatively minor issues can add up over time, contributing to issues that take a serious toll on your employees' health and safety. Housekeeping is one such issue. While organizing and cleaning your workplace may seem like a minor

concern, it has a powerful impact on safety and sanitation over the long run. The more consistent you are about housekeeping, the easier and less expensive it is to avoid issues like:

Slip & Fall Accidents

Slip and fall incidents are the second most common source of injury in the workplace, and the quality of your housekeeping is directly related to these risks. To understand this, it's important to consider all the ways in which poor organization or cleanliness can cause people to fall, such as by:

Creating Obstacles– If you have boxes, files, and other storage items strewn around your office, employees may trip over them. You can keep this problem to a minimum by creating a designated storage area and informing employees of its location.

Leaving Slippery Spots– When you spill oil, grease, and other liquids on hard floors, you put anyone who walks on these floors at risk of slipping. To limit this problem, designate certain areas for eating and drinking, and dissuade employees from bringing food and drink anywhere else. You should also clean up any spills that happen as soon as possible.

Ignoring Torn Carpets– When your carpets become torn at the edges, people risk tripping as they walk over them. You should thus repair torn parts of your flooring as quickly as possible, and mark it off in the meantime.

Few people who suffer slip and fall accidents see them coming. Thus, the better you are at eliminating sources of such accidents, the less likely they are to happen.