



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

If an accident is looking for a place to happen, it is likely to choose a cluttered, disorganized, dirty work area. A poorly maintained work environment can conceal all kinds of serious hazards. This can result in accidents ranging from trips and falls to chemical exposures and explosions. **Give your work area a regular going-over to make sure it is clean, orderly and free of hazards. Keep these good housekeeping standards in mind:**

- Clean up trash and scrap. Place them in the correct receptacles for trash or recycling.
- Put oily rags in approved covered containers.
- Promptly clean up spills of water, grease and other liquids before someone slips and falls.
- Do not allow unneeded materials or equipment to accumulate in your work area. Return supplies to the central storage area and tools to the tool crib.
- Clean up while you work when possible, disposing of scrap and putting tools back where they belong as soon as you are finished using them.
- Take the time to tidy up at the completion of each shift.
- Keep traffic areas free of tripping hazards such as cables and cords; reroute them overhead, in conduits or around the heavily-traveled area.
- Be careful where you place tool boxes; they are a common tripping hazard on shop floors.
- Never place items on stairs, not even for a moment.
- Do not obstruct the routes to fire exits, fire extinguishers, first aid kits or other emergency equipment.
- Make sure fire extinguishers and other emergency supplies are maintained regularly.
- Store flammable liquids correctly in approved, covered containers in properly ventilated areas.
- Keep chemicals in labeled containers, and store according to instructions. Know where to go for the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) for any chemical used in your work area.
- In case of a chemical spill know who to call and what to do to prevent exposure and injury.
- Also know whom to contact when you see other maintenance problems, whether it is ice in the entryway or a broken floor tile.
- Watch for wear and damage to carpets, floors and stairs which can cause tripping accidents.
- Also report burned out light fixtures so they can be changed promptly.
- Beware of any signs of electrical malfunction. Watch for wear and damage to electrical cables, cords, plugs and outlets. Do not use electrical equipment which has had makeshift repairs by unqualified, unauthorized personnel. Watch for signs of overloaded electrical circuits.
- Keep hand tools in good repair because damaged tools cause injuries. Turn defective tools in for repair or replacement.

Make sure machinery is properly guarded to prevent accidental contact with the point of operation or other moving or energized components. Watch for machine guards which have been the object of tampering or removal.

Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.