



# Safety Matters

Talking Points for Rockingham Co Schools

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## Ways to Keep Safe by Keeping Clean

Our duty is to keep students and staff from accidents; sometimes we create messes and clutter in the process, and that is OK. However, it is important to remember that cleanup is an essential part of every activity performed here. Without it, our facility would become a messy obstacle course, and walking from one point to another would mean navigating through a mess of materials, spills and tools. Not only would it be aggravating for co-workers; it would be very dangerous. Slips, trips and falls are a common cause of injury, and inadequate housekeeping is a contributing factor in most of these accidents. Furthermore, if we don't maintain our facility properly, we risk fire and other accident hazards, too.

### What is Housekeeping?

Avoiding dangerous conditions like those described above requires a commitment to housekeeping by every individual on our team. This means making spill cleanup, daily debris/scrap removal, general cleaning and use of trash bins a priority every day, throughout the day.

Good housekeeping also means constant vigilance. Remove any object or material that obstructs a pathway on the floor or ground and take care of any other materials that could pose a possible fire hazard or danger for co-workers and students. This includes:

- Extension cords
- Service carts
- Machinery
- Hand tools
- Hoses
- Cables
- Empty containers
- Debris
- Food
- Water or spills

### Do Your Part

Follow these housekeeping tips to keep yourself and your co-workers safe.

- Limit the amount of materials you take out to the quantities that you will need.
- When not in use, store tools and materials out of the way in storage bins or lockers.
- Keep flammable or hazardous wastes in covered, separate waste containers.
- Place warning signs in wet or muddy areas that could pose a slipping hazard.
- Control muddy areas using gravel, boards or plywood.

### Do Not Risk

When practicing good housekeeping, there are several things you should never attempt:

- Do not leave housekeeping responsibilities for the last few minutes of the day.
- Do not clean equipment without first locking out.
- Never pile material around fire extinguishers, sprinklers or emergency exits.
- Never blow off dust with compressed air; use a vacuum or brush.
- Do not collect broken glass or metal scraps in plastic bags.
- Never use bare hands when collecting waste; gloves prevent cuts and splinters.

### Fringe Benefits

When you keep our facility clutter-free, you don't just keep our students and staff safe, you help to make our schools more attractive. A clean environment can be pleasing to our staff and our students.

**Avoiding dangerous conditions in our facility requires a commitment to housekeeping by every individual on our team.**

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