Housekeeping toolbox talk

Site order · about 5 minutes · read it out, or say it in your own words

SITE OR JOB	DATE	PRESENTER

Offcuts, loose blocks, nails in old shuttering and hoses across walkways cause trips, cuts and puncture wounds on sites every week. Clutter also hides holes and edges, blocks the way out in an emergency and wastes time looking for tools. On a construction site, housekeeping has to happen all day, every day, not once a week.

SAY THIS

A tidy site is a safer and faster site

Think about the last time someone on a site got hurt by something small: a rusty nail through a boot, an ankle turned on a broken brick, a knee into a stack of steel. Most of those injuries come from things lying where they shouldn't. When material is everywhere, you also lose half the morning looking for the trowel or the level. Housekeeping is part of the job, not something for Friday afternoon.

Clean as you go

Clear up at the end of each task, not at the end of the week. Offcuts and waste go in the skip or the marked waste pile, never over the edge of the slab. When you strip shuttering, pull out or bend over the nails straight away. Sweep up spilled sand, cement and water on walkways before someone slips. If you made the mess, you clean it. If you find a dangerous mess that isn't yours, sort it out or report it.

Keep walkways and exits clear

Walkways, stairs, ladders, the gate and the way to the fire extinguisher must stay open all the time. Don't park the wheelbarrow on the stairs or stack bricks across a passage. Run extension leads and hoses along the side of a walkway or overhead, never across a doorway. In an emergency everybody must be able to get out fast, even in the dark or through smoke.

Stack and store it properly

Keep materials in the marked storage areas, on firm and level ground. Stack bricks and blocks in a stable pile that isn't too high, and cross them over where you can. Chock pipes and steel so they can't roll. Never lean sheets of board or glass where they can fall over onto someone. Keep fuel, paint and gas bottles in their own store, away from the waste pile and away from hot work.

Nothing left to fall

Don't leave tools, offcuts or loose bricks on scaffold platforms, roofs or the edge of a slab. Never throw waste down from height: carry it down or use a proper chute. When work is going on above a walkway, the area below must be fenced off or covered. A brick or a hammer dropped from the first floor can kill the person underneath.

CHECK ON SITE TODAY

- ☐ Walk the main walkway, the stairs and the route to the gate: what is lying in the way?
- ☐ Look at the skip or waste pile: is it overflowing, and when is the next one coming?
- ☐ Check the stacks of bricks, blocks, steel and pipes: stable, level, chocked and in the marked areas?
- ☐ Find extension leads and hoses lying across walkways or doorways and move them.
- ☐ Look up: are there loose tools, bricks or offcuts on the scaffold, the roof or the slab edge?
- ☐ Check that the fire extinguisher and the way out are clear, and that the site gate closes and is kept shut.

ASK THE CREW

- ? Where on this site do you most often have to step over or around something?
- ? Who clears up after your task today, and when?
- ? What would make it easier to keep your work area clean: more bins, a closer skip, or a set time each day?
- ? Have you seen anything left on a scaffold or an edge that could fall?

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR THIS JOB

Hard hat · Safety boots with puncture-resistant soles · Gloves for handling waste, offcuts and steel · Reflective vest

THE LAW

Construction Regulations, 2014, regulation 27: Housekeeping and general safeguarding on construction sites; Construction Regulations, 2014, regulation 28: Stacking and storage on construction sites; Construction Regulations, 2014, regulation 29(e) and (k): Fire precautions on construction sites; Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 14(d): General duties of employees at work. What each one says, in plain words, with links: sitediary.co.za/toolbox-talks/housekeeping/

Toolbox talk attendance register

TOPIC

Housekeeping: a tidy, safe site

DATE

SITE OR JOB

TIME

PRESENTER

COMPANY

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I attended this toolbox talk, that it was given in a language I understand, and that I could ask questions.

NO.	NAME AND SURNAME	COMPANY OR TRADE	SIGNATURE
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Keep this register in the site health and safety file. Log the talk in today's site diary with a photo of this page.