



TIP SHEET 23

HOUSEKEEPING

You will not read the term ‘housekeeping’ in any of the SQF Food Safety Codes or SQF Fundamentals. However “housekeeping”, or more correctly “good housekeeping practices, ”underpin the GMP elements outlined in Module 11. Good housekeeping comes first. It is the foundation of food safety.

Housekeeping not only influences food safety and quality management practices, it also supports occupational health and safety procedures by minimizing trip points and other employee hazards.

Housekeeping includes correct storage of tools and equipment - A place for everything and everything in its place. With good housekeeping, tools are easy to find when needed, don't get lost, are unlikely to interfere with product flow or contaminate materials or products, are visible for replacement or maintenance, and are less likely to cause accidents.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	APPLICABLE CODE ELEMENT(S)
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- UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF HOUSEKEEPING IN PROTECTING THE SAFETY OF THE SITE, PRODUCT AND PERSONNEL
- DECIDE WHAT ACTIONS TO TAKE TO IMPROVE HOUSEKEEPING WITHIN THE SITE

- MODULE 11

KEY TERMS

- HOUSEKEEPING

Cleanliness and neatness of a work area, storage area and surrounding environment with the designation of a proper place for everything and everything in its proper place.

Housekeeping includes support areas such as engineering shops, lunch rooms, locker rooms and toilets.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

1. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety identifies the following benefits from effective housekeeping:
 - a. reduced handling to ease the flow of materials.
 - b. fewer tripping and slipping incidents in clutter-free and spill-free work areas.
 - c. decreased fire hazards.
 - d. lower worker exposures to hazardous products (e.g. dusts, vapors).



TIP SHEET 23

- e. better control of tools and materials, including inventory and supplies.
- f. more efficient equipment cleanup and maintenance.
- g. better hygienic conditions leading to improved health.
- h. more effective use of space.
- i. reduced property damage by improving preventive maintenance.
- j. less janitorial work.
- k. improved morale.
- l. improved productivity (tools and materials will be easy to find).

The requirements of Good Housekeeping Practices are detailed in Module 11 of the SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing and the SQF Fundamentals and include:

2. Tools and equipment (11.2.9)

- a. Ensure correct design and use of tools and equipment (11.2.9.1).
- b. Eliminate tools and equipment from food contact areas that could pose a threat to product safety, e.g. snap-off blades, unprotected glass items, paper clips, etc. (11.2.9.1).
- c. Make sure tools and equipment are maintained in a good state of repair (11.2.10.1) and are covered, protected or stored when not in use (11.2.9.8).
- d. Report and repair breakage, malfunction or wear of tools and equipment (11.2.9.2).
- e. Correct cleaning of tools and equipment after use (11.2.9.8).
- f. Ensure temporary repairs do not pose a risk of contamination and are fixed as soon as is practical (11.2.10.8).
- g. Store maintenance related items such as nuts and bolts, lubricants and rags in specified areas.
- h. Do not use positive air pressure hoses unless it is completely unavoidable and ensure air and water hoses are correctly stored and not left on the floor.
- i. Minimize dust build-up, or where dust is unavoidable, exhaust or ventilate the area to prevent accumulation of dust.
- j. Make sure that pest control stations such as electric insect control devices, traps or baits do not pose a threat to food products or employee welfare (11.2.7.4).
- k. Make sure that wooden items and pallets are kept in good repair.

3. Storage of materials and product (11.6.1, 11.6.3)

- a. Store chemicals, maintenance items, lubricants, waste materials, rework, and packaging away from open food product or processing equipment.
- b. Ensure no materials, food products or packaging materials come into contact with the floor.
- c. Cover raw materials, work in progress and finished product when processing is delayed and/or equipment is down for any period.
- d. Make sure prohibited items such as chemicals or toxins are kept out of processing areas.



TIP SHEET 23

4. Cleaning (11.2.13)
 - a. Equipment cleaning and sanitation is covered in 11.2.13 and Tip Sheet 24. In addition, there are other housekeeping considerations:
 - i. Clean spills and breakages as soon as they occur;
 - ii. Quickly remove empty raw material and ingredient bags and containers from food processing areas;
 - iii. Clean storage ledges, overheads, light fittings, cupboards and cabinets on a regular basis;
 - iv. Place all waste into correct bins and regularly remove waste from production areas.

In summary, keep the food production area clean and tidy!!

RELEVANT RESOURCES

- Recommended International Code of Practice, General Principles of Food Hygiene, CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003, Codex Alimentarius Commission (WHO, FAO), www.fao.org/docrep/005/y1579e/y1579e02.htm
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/house.html>
- Trotto, Sarah. "11 tips for effective workplace housekeeping." Safety + Health magazine. July 1, 2015. <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/12470-tips-for-effective-workplace-housekeeping>. Accessed August 16, 2018.