



# Safety Works - Keep Informed

## OSHA Control and Prevention - COVID- 19

Measures for protecting workers from exposure to, and infection with, the novel coronavirus, COVID-19 depend on the type of work being performed and exposure risk, including potential for interaction with infectious people and contamination of the work environment. Employers should adapt infection control strategies based on a thorough hazard assessment, using appropriate combinations of engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent worker exposures. Some OSHA standards that apply to preventing occupational exposure to COVID-19 also require employers to train workers on elements of infection prevention, including PPE.



OSHA has developed this interim guidance to help prevent worker exposure to COVID-19. General guidance for all U.S. workers and employers. For all workers, regardless of specific exposure risks, it is always a good practice to:

1. Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Employers and workers in operations where there is no specific exposure hazard should remain aware of the evolving outbreak situation. Changes in outbreak conditions may warrant additional precautions in some workplaces not currently highlighted in this guidance.

### Identify and Isolate Suspected Cases

In all workplaces where exposure to the COVID-19 may occur, prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical first step in protecting workers, visitors, and others at the worksite.

- Immediately isolate people suspected of having COVID-19. For example, move potentially infectious people to isolation rooms and close the doors. On an aircraft, move potentially infectious people to seats away from passengers and crew, if possible and without compromising aviation safety. In other worksites, move potentially infectious people to a location away from workers, customers, and other visitors.
- Take steps to limit spread of the person's infectious respiratory secretions, including by providing them a facemask and asking them to wear it, if they can tolerate doing so. Note: A surgical mask on a patient or other sick person should not be confused with PPE for a worker; the mask acts to contain potentially infectious respiratory secretions at the source (i.e., the person's nose and mouth).
- If possible, isolate people suspected of having COVID-19 separately from those with confirmed cases of the virus to prevent further transmission, including in screening, triage, or healthcare facilities.
- Restrict the number of personnel entering isolation areas, including the room of a patient with suspected/confirmed COVID-19.
- Protect workers in close contact\* with the sick person by using additional engineering and administrative control, safe work practices and PPE.

*\*CDC defines "close contact" as being about six (6) feet (approximately two (2) meters) from an infected person or within the room or care area of an infected patient for a prolonged period while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact also includes instances where there is direct contact with infectious secretions while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact generally does not include brief interactions, such as walking past a person.*



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**Safety  
Commitment**  
**Nobody gets  
hurt today!**

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## 11 Tips For Effective Workplace Housekeeping—By National Safety and Health Council—Sarah Trotto

### Key Points

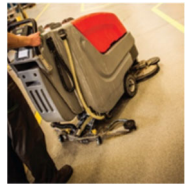
- **Housekeeping can help prevent injuries and improve productivity.**
- **Every worker should play a role in housekeeping, even if that means keeping his or her own workspace clean.**
- **Housekeeping should be an ongoing process, not a one-time practice.**

To some people, the word “housekeeping” calls to mind cleaning floors and surfaces, removing dust, and organizing clutter. But in a work setting, it means much more. Housekeeping is crucial to safe workplaces. It can help prevent injuries and improve productivity and morale, as well as make a good first impression on visitors, according to Cari Gray, safety consultant for the Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation. It also can help an employer avoid potential fines for non-compliance.

The practice extends from traditional offices to industrial workplaces, including factories, warehouses and manufacturing plants that present special challenges such as hazardous materials, combustible dust and other flammables. Experts agree that all workplace safety programs should incorporate housekeeping, and every worker should play a part. In addition, housekeeping should have management’s commitment so workers realize its importance. Here are 11 tips for effective workplace housekeeping.

**1 Prevent slips, trips and falls** Slips, trips and falls were the second leading cause of nonfatal occupational injuries or illnesses involving days away from work in 2013, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

OSHA states that all workplaces should be “kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.” The rule includes passageways, storerooms and service rooms. Floors should be clean and dry. Drainage should be present where “wet processes are used”.



Employers should select adequate flooring (e.g., cement, ceramic tile or another material), as different types of flooring hold up better under certain conditions, said Fred Norton, technical director of ergonomics and manufacturing technology for Risk Control Services, Liberty Mutual Insurance in Walnut Creek, CA. Then, develop and implement housekeeping procedures using appropriate cleaners.

“Things like oils and grease – if you don’t use the right kind of cleaning protocols, you’ll just spread slipperiness around rather than getting it up and off the floor,” Norton said.

To help prevent slip, trip and fall incidents, the OSHA recommends the following:

- Report and clean up spills and leaks.
- Keep aisles and exits clear of items.
- Consider installing mirrors and warning signs to help with blind spots.
- Replace worn, ripped or damaged flooring.
- Consider installing anti-slip flooring in areas that can’t always be cleaned.
- Use drip pans and guards.

In addition, provide mats, platforms, false floors or “other dry standing places” where useful, according to OSHA. Every workplace should be free of projecting nails, splinters, holes and loose boards. Gray added that employers should audit for trip hazards, and encourage workers to focus on the task at hand.



**2 Eliminate fire hazards** Employees are responsible for keeping unnecessary combustible materials from accumulating in the work area. Combustible waste should be “stored in covered metal receptacles and disposed of daily,” according to OSHA.

The National Safety Council “Supervisors’ Safety Manual” includes these precautionary measures for fire safety:

- Keep combustible materials in the work area only in amounts needed for the job. When they are unneeded, move them to an assigned safe storage area.
- Store quick-burning, flammable materials in designated locations away from ignition sources.
- Avoid contaminating clothes with flammable liquids. Change clothes if contamination occurs.
- Keep passageways and fire doors free of obstructions. Stairwell doors should be kept closed. Do not store items in stairwells.
- Keep materials at least 18 inches away from automatic sprinklers, fire extinguishers and sprinkler controls. The 18-inch distance is required, but 24 to 36 inches is recommended. Clearance of 3 feet is required between piled material and the ceiling. If stock is piled more than 15 feet high, clearance should be doubled. Check applicable codes, including Life Safety Code, ANSI/NFPA 101-2009.
- Hazards in electrical areas should be reported, and work orders should be issued to fix them.

**3 Control dust** Dust accumulation of more than 1/32 of an inch – or 0.8 millimeters – covering at least 5 percent of a room’s surface poses a significant explosion hazard, according to the Quincy, MA-based National Fire Protection Association. This dust accumulation is about as thick as a dime or paper clip. An industrial hygienist should test the workplace for exposures if air quality and dust are concerns, Gray said.



NFPA 654 – a standard on preventing fire and dust explosions – addresses identifying hazard areas, controlling dust and housekeeping. The standard states that vacuuming is the “preferred” method of cleaning. Sweeping and water wash-down are other options. “Blow-downs” using compressed air or steam is allowed for inaccessible or unsafe surfaces.

Industrial vacuums can clean walls, ceilings, machinery and other places, OSHA notes.

“You want to use wet methods or have high-efficiency vacuum systems,” said Steve Ahrenholz, senior industrial hygienist at NIOSH’s Division of Surveillance, Hazard Evaluations and Field Studies. “You don’t want to use just a shop vac or dry-sweep it – definitely not using compressed air to blow it. [Then] you’re just re-suspending the dust and distributing it all over.”

Dust also can affect equipment’s length of life and quality of products, Ahrenholz added.



**4 Avoid tracking materials** Work-area mats – which can be cloth or sticky-topped – should be kept clean and maintained. This helps prevent the spread of hazardous materials to other work areas or home, Gray said. Check all mats to ensure they are not tripping hazards.

Additionally, separate cleaning protocols may be needed for different areas to prevent cross-contamination, Norton notes. Avoid using the same mop to clean both an oily spill and in another area, for example.

If the materials are toxic, industrial hygiene testing, uniforms and showering facilities might be needed, Gray said. Employees who work with toxic materials should not wear their work clothes home, Ahrenholz added.

**5 Prevent falling objects** Gray noted that protections such as a toe board, toe rail or net can help prevent objects from falling and hitting workers or equipment.

Other tips include stacking boxes and materials straight up and down to keep them from falling, said Paul Errico, a Fairfield, CT-based safety consultant. Place heavy objects on lower shelves, and keep equipment away from the edges of desks and tables. Also, refrain from stacking objects in areas where workers walk, including aisles.



Keep layout in mind so workers are not exposed to hazards as they walk through areas, Norton added.



**6 Clear clutter** A cluttered workplace can lead to ergonomics issues and possible injuries because workers have less space to move, Gray said.

“When an area is cluttered, you’re going to likely have a cut or laceration injury,” she said. “You’re not going to have as much room to set up your workstation like you should and move around. You’re going to be twisting your body rather than moving your whole

body.”

The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation recommends that workers return tools and other materials to storage after using them, and dispose of materials that are no longer needed.

Keep aisles, stairways, emergency exits, electrical panels and doors clear of clutter, and purge untidy areas. Empty trash receptacles before they overflow.

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## Cal OSHA Updates

Cal OSHA Regulation changes for all employers effective 07/01/2020 §3203. Injury and Illness Prevention Program must document the employee access regulation changes.

All Gender’ Bathrooms Enforcement by Cal/OSHA California’s Office of Administrative Law has given final approval for a Cal/OSHA proposal aimed at implementing state law on “all-gender” toilets. The regulatory revision is effective on July 1st, 2020-based on 2016’s AB 1732

For more information regarding the development of Occupational Safety and Health regulations, go to <https://www.dir.ca.gov/OSHSB/>

## Corona Virus Resources

Laborers’ Health & Safety <https://www.lhsfna.org/index.cfm/coronavirus-fact-sheet/>

Cal OSHA <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Health-Care-General-Industry.html>

Fed OSHA <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

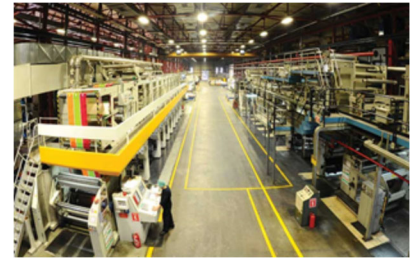
World Health Organization (WHO) <https://www.who.int/>

## Why are they important, and how can safety pros get employees involved?

### Key Points

- One definition of a near miss is when an unplanned event occurs resulting in no injuries or damages, but had the potential for such.
- Communicate near-miss programs, make them easy to use and take action on near misses reported, one stakeholder suggests.
- Employee involvement is vital for the success of a near-miss program.

An employee walks down the hall, stepping over an extension cord stretched across his path. He turns a corner and nearly collides with another worker. To avoid the collision, he steps to the side, spilling coffee onto the floor and inadvertently jostling a shelving unit, on which a tool placed close to the edge of the top shelf falls and hits the ground.



No one is hurt in this fictional scenario. However, the employees in it experience multiple near-miss situations – any one of which could have led to a serious injury.

Some people may be tempted to write off near misses as “no harm, no foul” situations. But safety professionals such as Jeff Ruebesam say employers who track near misses, determine how and why they occurred, and take corrective action can prevent similar – or more serious – incidents from happening in the future.

“We don’t look at what happened; we look at what could have happened,” said Ruebesam, corporate vice president of health, safety and environment at Irving, TX-based engineering company Fluor.

### What and Why

Not all safety professionals agree on what constitutes a near miss. A fact sheet from OSHA and the National Safety Council stresses that although near misses cause no immediate harm, they can precede events in which a loss or injury could occur. Employers that encourage the reporting of near misses gain an opportunity to prevent future incidents.

“It’s a great tool,” Michael Crowl said. Crowl is the director of environmental, health and safety at PIKA International, an environmental engineering and remediation services firm based in Stafford, TX. “A near miss is a leading indicator to an accident that, if scrutinized and used correctly, can prevent injuries and damages.”

### Report and React

Collecting near-miss reports helps create a culture that seeks to identify and control hazards, which will reduce risks and the potential for harm, OSHA states. But a well-run program goes beyond the collection of reports.

Ruebesam outlined three key elements of a successful near-miss program: Crowl agreed. “You must not take a near miss lightly,” he said. “You must carefully investigate it, determine the root causes and implement appropriate controls accordingly.”

At Fluor, near misses are ranked by potential severity. If it could have resulted in an injury or death, a full investigation is conducted. If the near miss creates a condition that is less serious – such as a trip hazard due to an electric cord – the hazard is abated and the risk is communicated to everyone.

At PIKA, lessons learned from near misses are shared with employees through various platforms, including at company meetings and individual project sites. Sometimes, the near misses are communicated by the president and CEO.

A recent email from PIKA’s president and CEO described an incident in which a container used for discarded cigarettes was smoldering. To prevent this from happening again, workers were advised to properly extinguish cigarettes in the sand provided in the containers, and keep combustibles and other debris out of the containers. Additionally, the company updated the design of the containers.

“The intent is to learn the lesson once – at a near-miss level – implement appropriate controls and then share it amongst our projects to prevent similar accident potentials from happening,” Crowl said.

### Employee Involvement

Employee participation in any near-miss program is vital, Ruebesam said. “It’s employees themselves who witness these things,” he added.

Workers should be trained on how to properly identify and recognize potential hazards. To help make it easy for employees to submit near misses and ensure good data, consider allowing them to turn in near-miss reports anonymously, Ruebesam suggested.

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## 11 Tips For Effective Workplace Housekeeping—(continued from page 3)

**7 Store materials properly** According to OSHA’s Materials Handling, Storage, Use and Disposal Standard, storage areas should not have an accumulation of materials that present hazards for tripping, fire, explosion or pests.

Some workers make the mistake of storing ladders or other items inside electrical closets where they can block an electrical panel, creating a fire hazard and violating OSHA regulations, Errico said.

“I found that in a couple places. That would surprise employers if they’re not looking for it,” Errico said. “It’s important that they stay on top of it; realize it’s not just the manufacturing floor, maintenance area, warehouse or main storage areas, but these little areas in buildings that create a problem with storage.”

Unused materials and equipment should be stored out of the way of workers. Avoid using workspaces for storage, according to CCOHS. And remember to put everything back in its proper place, Ohio BWC adds.

Ahrenholz recommends keeping a storage space nearby so workers are encouraged to use it.

“There’s a responsibility to keep your work area in order and return tools to where they belong,” he said. “The storage space, if readily useable, is designed in such a way where it can be used without stretching too far or lifting heavy loads. They’re more likely to use it than if they have to go quite a ways to place something. Or they’re going to keep something rather than go back because they have to take the extra time to get it.”



**8 Use and inspect personal protective equipment and tools** Errico has seen workers’ compensation cases stemming from employees who did not wear PPE when cleaning up spills or other material, such as broken glass or plywood, and then suffered cuts or splinters.

Wear basic PPE – such as closed-toe shoes and safety glasses – while performing housekeeping, Gray said. Determine what type of PPE to don based on the potential risks.

Regularly inspect, clean and fix tools, according to CCOHS. Remove any damaged tools from the work area.

**9 Determine frequency** All workers should participate in housekeeping, especially in terms of keeping their own work areas tidy, reporting safety hazards and cleaning up spills, if possible.

“Every worker does have a role in housekeeping,” Ahrenholz said. “If they see something is becoming a problem, they need to report it.”

Before the end of a shift, workers should inspect and clean their workspaces and remove unused materials. This dedication can reduce time spent cleaning later, experts say.

How much debris or contaminants the workplace releases can help determine the frequency of housekeeping. A company should have a mixture of deep cleaning and more frequent, lighter cleaning that involves sweeping and responding to spills, Norton said.

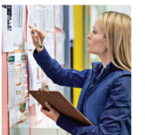


**10 Create written rules** Experts agree that housekeeping policies should be put in writing. That way, Norton said, they are formal and defined. Written protocols could specify which cleaners, tools and methods should be used.

“We found there are many gaps in the effectiveness of floor cleaning in the operations we’ve done research on,” Norton said. “It is an area that sometimes gets overlooked. That’s why we think it’s important for the written part of the protocols and defined training so people are aware of and follow the proper procedures.”

**11 Think long-term** Housekeeping should be more than a one-time initiative – it should continue through monitoring and auditing. Keep records, maintain a regular walkthrough inspection schedule, report hazards and train employees to help sustain housekeeping. Set goals and expectations, and base auditing on those goals, Gray said.

“Housekeeping issues are very common. They can be easy to fix,” she said. “It’s going to take persistence and dedication.”



## Reporting Near Misses - *Continued from page 4*

“If we require them to put their name on it, some of the information we would otherwise get wouldn’t happen,” he said.

Similarly, avoid naming people who may have contributed to the near miss. At PIKA, individuals involved in near misses are not openly identified.

“We’re doing our best to keep the focus on lessons learned and what not to do, rather than focusing on who did wrong and assigning blame,” Crowl said. “As soon as we start bringing it to the ‘blame game,’ then we’re going to lose the benefits brought to PIKA from the lessons learned.”

To get employees in the habit of turning in near-miss data, employers may be tempted to set quotas. But Ruebesam advises against this. Although quotas may be beneficial for establishing expectations when kicking off a new reporting program, he said, continuing these requirements could negatively affect the quality of the information employers receive.

“If people look at it as an obligatory quota thing, they might just get it out of the way right away,” Ruebesam said, cautioning that workers who have met their quota may ignore subsequent – and potentially more dangerous – near misses.

Another way to encourage reporting is to offer incentives to workers who report hazards. The fact sheet from OSHA and the National Safety Council states that this type of incentive – as opposed to those that offer rewards for low or zero injury rates – can encourage a reporting culture.

Additionally, safety pros may find more support from employees when investigating a near miss than when investigating an incident. “Many times, I’ve found people are much more open to make a positive team contribution towards the prevention of an accident through the discussion of a near miss than if an accident has already occurred,” Crowl said. “People seem more willing to talk than when something has happened.”

### Ensuring success

Organizations that implement near-miss programs credit them with improving safety. PIKA, a company with about 130 employees, has been running its current near-miss program for nearly two years. After the first full year of the program, the company’s OSHA recordable number fell from 4 to 1, tying an all-time low for the company. The total incident rate dropped from 3.62 to 0.817 – in just one year.

Although Crowl attributes some of the success to a newly implemented job safety analysis process, he believes the near-miss program played a big role.

But success is dependent on the support of all employees. “If it’s not supported by all levels of the organization and positively reinforced at all levels, then it’s not going to be effective. The success of our program is a direct reflection of our entire team’s commitment to safety,” Crowl said.

Ruebesam agreed. Employees want to know their employer is serious about the program, so management needs to work hard and be persistent in promoting the value of near misses, he said.

“You have to demonstrate over time you’re committed to it,” Ruebesam said. “If you can do that, you’ll have a better program.”

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## Stay Safe, Someone At Home Is Waiting For You

## Motor Vehicle Fleet Management Bulletin—from the Risk Engineering Organization of The Hartford

“Drowsy driving kills — it claimed 795 lives in 2017. Yet falling asleep at the wheel is preventable. Learn about three factors commonly associated with drowsy-driving crashes and pick up some helpful tips to avoid falling asleep at the wheel.”<sup>1</sup>

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

### Attitudes About Drowsy Driving Need to Change

Fatigue has costly effects on the safety, health, and quality of life of the American public. Whether fatigue is caused by sleep restriction due to a new baby waking every couple of hours, a late or long shift at work, hanging out late with friends, or a long and monotonous drive for the holidays — the negative outcomes can be the same. These include impaired cognition and performance, motor vehicle crashes, workplace accidents, and health consequences.

Tackling these issues can be difficult when our values frequently do not align with avoiding drowsy driving. In a 24/7 society, with an emphasis on work, longer commutes, and exponential advancement of technology, many people do not get the sleep they need. Effectively dealing with the drowsy-driving problem requires fundamental changes to societal norms and especially attitudes about drowsy driving.

The terms drowsy, sleepy, and fatigue are used interchangeably although there are differences in the way these terms are used and understood.

### Precise Numbers of Drowsy-Driving Crashes, Injuries, and Fatalities Are Hard to Nail Down

Unfortunately, determining a precise number of drowsy-driving crashes, injuries, and fatalities is not yet possible. Crash investigators can look for clues that drowsiness contributed to a crash, but these clues are not always identifiable or conclusive.

NHTSA’s census of fatal crashes and estimate of traffic-related crashes and injuries rely on police and hospital reports to determine the incidence of drowsy-driving crashes. NHTSA estimates that in 2017, 91,000 police-reported crashes involved drowsy drivers. These crashes led to an estimated 50,000 people injured and nearly 800 deaths.

But there is broad agreement across the traffic safety, sleep science, and public health communities that this is an underestimate of the impact of drowsy driving.

### Sleepiness can result in crashes any time of the day or night, but three factors are most commonly associated with drowsy-driving crashes.

1. Occur most frequently between midnight and 6 a.m., or in the late afternoon. At both times of the day, people experience dips in their circadian rhythm—the human body’s internal clock that regulates sleep;
2. Often involve only a single driver (and no passengers) running off the road at a high rate of speed with no evidence of braking; and
3. Frequently occur on rural roads and highways.

### How To Avoid Driving Drowsy

1. Getting adequate sleep on a daily basis is the only true way to protect yourself against the risks of driving when you’re drowsy. Experts urge consumers to make it a priority to get seven to eight hours of sleep per night. For more information on healthy sleep, see Healthy Sleep At A Glance at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute website.
2. Before the start of a long family car trip, get a good night’s sleep, or you could put your entire family and others at risk.
3. Many teens do not get enough sleep at a stage in life when their biological need for sleep increases, which makes them vulnerable to the risk of drowsy-driving crashes, especially on longer trips. Advise your teens to delay driving until they’re well-rested.
4. Avoid drinking any alcohol before driving. Consumption of alcohol interacts with sleepiness to increase drowsiness and impairment.
5. Always check your prescription and over-the-counter medication labels to see if drowsiness could result from their use.

# Safety for life



### Total Loss Approach

DEFINITION -

WHAT DOES

**TOTAL LOSS APPROACH** MEAN?

The total loss approach is a method for reviewing all accidents and near miss incidents and placing a strong emphasis on developing measures to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future.

This method also requires that all potential causes for accidents be evaluated and that controls be established for these exposures as well.

*By Safeopedia*

*Continued on page 8*

6. If you take medications that could cause drowsiness as a side effect, use public transportation when possible.
7. If you drive, avoid driving during the peak sleepiness periods (midnight – 6 a.m. and late afternoon). If you must drive during the peak sleepiness periods, stay vigilant for signs of drowsiness, such as crossing over roadway lines or hitting a rumble strip, especially if you're driving alone.

1. Drinking coffee or energy drinks alone is not always enough. They might help you feel more alert, but the effects last only a short time, and you might not be as alert as you think you are. If you drink coffee and are seriously sleep-deprived, you still may have “micro sleeps” or brief losses of consciousness that can last for four or five seconds. This means that at 55 miles per hour, you’ve traveled more than 100 yards down the road while asleep. That’s plenty of time to cause a crash.
2. If you start to get sleepy while you’re driving, drink one to two cups of coffee and pull over for a short 20- minute nap in a safe place, such as a lighted, designated rest stop. This has been shown to increase alertness in scientific studies, but only for short time periods.

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