

Housekeeping

Effective housekeeping is essential to maintaining a safe and hazard-free workplace. Poor housekeeping, improper storage of materials, and cluttered work areas are common causes of injuries. To ensure a clean and organized worksite, all groups—NCC T&D Project Leaders, supervisors, and workers—must work together.

Housekeeping involves a wide range of activities, including the disposal and storage of materials, handling of flammable or toxic substances, proper signage, adequate lighting, and ventilation. In Saudi Arabia, these practices must comply with Saudi Arabian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and, where applicable, the specific standards of clients such as Saudi Electricity Company (SEC) and Saudi Aramco (SA).

General Housekeeping Requirements

To maintain a safe worksite, the following housekeeping practices must be implemented:

Daily Cleanup:

- Waste material and debris must be cleaned up and removed at least once a day or as often as necessary to prevent hazardous conditions.
- Garbage must be disposed of in designated areas, and reusable materials must be stored properly.

Preventing Falling Debris:

- Garbage, debris, and other materials must not be allowed to fall from one level to another.
- Materials must be lowered using a chute, container, hoist, or crane.
- Demolition materials may fall or be dropped into an enclosed, designated area that is inaccessible to people.

Hazard Removal:

- Protruding objects such as formwork ties, reinforcing steel, or nails must be removed, cut off, or protected as soon as possible to prevent injuries.

Material Storage:

- Materials and equipment must be stored or moved in a way that does not endanger workers.
- Materials must not be stored under or near energized outdoor overhead electrical conductors.
- Blocking, support chains, metal bands, wire rope, and rigging components must be removed safely.
- Materials must be piled or stacked securely to prevent tipping, collapsing, or rolling.
- Materials must not be stored within 1.8 metres of:
 - An opening in a floor or roof.
 - The open edge of a floor, roof, or balcony.
 - An excavation.
- Exception: Small masonry units (e.g., bricks, blocks) handled by one worker and used at the edge of a floor, roof, or excavation may be stacked if the pile height is less than the distance from the pile to the edge.

Storage of Hazardous Materials

Combustible, Corrosive, or Toxic Substances:

- Must be stored in suitable containers.
- Compressed gas cylinders must be:
 - Secured in an upright position.
 - Covered with a protective cap when not in use.
 - Stored outside buildings if spent (used).
 - Kept at least three metres from ignition sources (except for specific exceptions like propane tools or vehicles).

Flammable Liquids or Gas:

- Must be stored in approved buildings or storage tanks.

- Portable containers must be approved by a recognized testing laboratory and labeled with the approved use and testing laboratory name.
- Only one normal workday's supply of flammable liquid may be stored in a building or structure, unless stored in a controlled access area or explosion-proof room.

Signage

- Warning Signs: Signs must be posted in prominent locations to warn workers of hazards. Signs must display the word "DANGER" in letters at least 150 millimetres high.
- Unauthorized Access: Signs must state that unauthorized persons are prohibited from entering hazardous areas.
- Specific Locations for Signs:
 - Next to hoisting areas.
 - Under boatswain's chairs or suspended work platforms.
 - At chute outlets.
 - At access points to areas with noxious gases, vapors, dust, fumes, or lack of oxygen.
 - Near energized overhead electrical conductors exceeding 750 volts.

Lighting

- Worksites must be adequately lit in areas where workers are present, including entrances and exits.
- Temporary lighting systems must use bulbs enclosed by mechanical protection devices.

Ventilation

- Worksites must be naturally or mechanically ventilated in areas where:
 - Workers could inhale noxious gases, vapors, dust, or fumes.
 - Workers could be harmed by a lack of oxygen.
 - Explosive mixtures of gases, vapors, dust, or fumes could form.
- If ventilation is not practical, workers must be provided with appropriate respiratory protective equipment.

Internal Combustion Engines

- Internal combustion engines must not be used in excavations, buildings, or enclosed structures without an adequate air supply for combustion.
- Exhaust must be discharged away from the worksite to prevent accumulation.
- Airborne concentrations of carbon monoxide must be tested to ensure they do not exceed regulatory limits.
- A written testing strategy must be developed by NCC T&D Project Leaders and the joint health and safety committee or representative.

Drums, Tanks, and Pipelines

- Drums, tanks, pipelines, or other containers must be depressurized, drained, cleaned, and ventilated before repair or alteration.
- They must not contain explosive, flammable, or harmful substances during repairs.
- Hot-tapping and boxing-in may be performed by competent workers under controlled conditions.

NCC T&D Project Leaders Key Responsibilities

NCC T&D Project Leaders must ensure the following:

- Daily Inspections: Conduct regular inspections to ensure proper housekeeping practices are followed.
- Training: Provide workers with training on housekeeping, material storage, and hazard prevention.
- Signage and Lighting: Ensure adequate signage and lighting are in place to warn workers of hazards.
- Ventilation and Air Quality: Monitor ventilation systems and air quality to protect workers from harmful substances.

- **Compliance:** Ensure all housekeeping practices comply with Saudi Arabian regulations and client-specific standards.

Worker Responsibilities

Workers must:

- **Follow Housekeeping Protocols:** Adhere to all housekeeping and material storage guidelines.
- **Report Hazards:** Notify supervisors of any unsafe conditions or hazards.
- **Use PPE:** Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling hazardous materials.
- **Participate in Training:** Attend all required training sessions on housekeeping and safety procedures.

Additional Considerations for NCC T&D Projects

Given the high-risk nature of NCC T&D's operations, the following measures are recommended:

- **Regular Audits:** Conduct regular housekeeping audits to identify and address potential hazards.
- **Waste Management Plans:** Develop and implement waste management plans to ensure proper disposal of materials.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Train workers on emergency response procedures for spills or hazardous material incidents.

Key Takeaways

- **Housekeeping Importance:** Effective housekeeping prevents injuries and maintains a safe worksite.
- **Material Storage:** Materials must be stored securely to prevent tipping, collapsing, or rolling.
- **Hazardous Materials:** Combustible, corrosive, or toxic substances must be stored and handled safely.
- **Signage and Lighting:** Adequate signage and lighting are essential for hazard communication and worker safety.
- **Ventilation:** Proper ventilation protects workers from harmful gases, vapors, and dust.

For more information, refer to NCC T&D's relevant IMS procedures or consult our HSE Department for expert guidance and training resources aligned with Saudi Arabian regulatory requirements.