

# Back to basics

## Site housekeeping

Every week, 50 Victorian construction workers are injured seriously enough to stop work because basic site safety and housekeeping is not up to scratch.

These injuries might not be life-threatening, but they are painful, costly, and the effects can be permanent, making it difficult to work in the future.

They'll hurt their back or neck, tear a ligament, cut themselves or break a bone. On average, these injuries will keep them off the job for about 15 weeks. And it's costing industry over \$50 million a year.

Poor supervision, and particularly poor housekeeping, is often to blame. Workers might cut open a leg on an offcut, trip over building rubble or strain a knee stepping backwards off a plank.

Good housekeeping doesn't just happen.

**Everyone on site needs to do their bit.  
It's time to get back to basics.**

### Start with a clean slate

Ensure housekeeping is included in all work activities, from planning through to start-up and completion.

- Contracts** State in the contract that each trade is responsible for cleaning up after themselves and that penalties might apply if they don't.
- Site rules** Before work starts, develop site rules that include housekeeping responsibilities, and make sure everyone on site knows them.
- Safety plans** Ensure the site layout supports good housekeeping, eg designated delivery and storage areas, waste management, walkways and vehicle parking.

### Supervise, supervise, supervise!

Once the site is established, proper supervision is critical to ensure everybody follows the site rules.

Principal contractors and sub-contractors should:

- monitor the work and fix any problems
- ensure contractors and visitors know who the site supervisor is
- ensure the supervisor is available and contactable
- ensure all workers and visitors receive a site induction
- ensure the site is maintained in a tidy condition.

### Does your site tick all the boxes?

Anyone should be able to safely access or work on site. Regularly inspect your site to ensure contractors are following the rules, including keeping the workplace tidy and correctly storing materials.

See over for a checklist to help you to keep your site tidy – and your workers safe.

### Further Information

#### WorkSafe Advisory Service

Toll-free: 1800 136 089

Email: [info@worksafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@worksafe.vic.gov.au)

[worksafe.vic.gov.au/construction](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au/construction)

## Site housekeeping inspection checklist

<b>Site inspection by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Ground/Flooring</b>	<b>Delivery and storage of equipment and materials</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are there any trip hazards, including steps, potholes and uneven surfaces? <input type="checkbox"/> Are ramps adequately supported and stabilised? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the ground smooth, dry and free of debris? <input type="checkbox"/> Are trenches covered or barricaded?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a designated area for deliveries? <input type="checkbox"/> Do deliveries block walkways or nearby footpaths? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a designated storage area? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the storage area orderly? <input type="checkbox"/> Are items stacked appropriately? <input type="checkbox"/> If racking is used, is it appropriate and in good condition? <input type="checkbox"/> Are deliveries scheduled 'just in time' to reduce quantity of materials needing storage?	
<b>Access and movement around the site</b>	<b>Waste</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are the site access and exit points clear? <input type="checkbox"/> Are driveways and footpaths clear of materials? <input type="checkbox"/> Are scaffolds clear of debris and material? <input type="checkbox"/> Are walkways wide enough for equipment and is access safe? <input type="checkbox"/> Is equipment stored in designated areas when not in use? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the site properly lit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are there adequate empty bins/skips? <input type="checkbox"/> Are bins/skips regularly emptied?	
	<b>Weather</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the site easily secured during windy conditions?	
	<b>Footwear</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the footwear worn by workers suitable for the workplace and task?	
<b>Work areas</b>	<b>Vehicle parking</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are work areas kept clean, uncluttered and free of waste? <input type="checkbox"/> Do trades 'clean as they go'?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are vehicles parked in an orderly manner? <input type="checkbox"/> Are vehicles overcrowded on the site? <input type="checkbox"/> Does vehicle parking affect access and departure from the site?	

Action required	By who	Date due	Signed off