

## HOUSEKEEPING AND THE EFFECTS OF DIRT & DISORDER

You are probably thinking "Here it comes again. Keep the place clean. I have heard it a million times." Too many supervisors automatically connect "housekeeping" with merely sweeping and wiping dirt off machines and equipment. Cleanliness is a part of housekeeping, but it falls far short of being housekeeping. The most critical and most overlooked part of housekeeping is ORDER. Many work areas may be clean but it is rare to find one in ORDER. Order has a very special meaning in this case defined as:

A place is in order when there are no unnecessary things about and when all necessary things are in their proper places.

"No" in this sentence means NONE! - NOT ANY - NOT EVEN ONE!

If you read this definition carefully and pay attention to each word, you will have a better understanding of order than the majority of supervisors have. For instance, you will know a place is not in order simply because "there is a place for everything, and everything is in its place". Things which are in their place must be necessary things. If they are not necessary, they have no place in your area. How many production areas are used for storage areas? How many supplies are stacked in production areas simply because the "will be needed one of these days"? While they are waiting for that "one day a year" when they will be used, they take up valuable space and cause time wasting congestion for the other 364 days! Even things which are necessary can cause the same problems if they are not kept in their proper places.

The other thing to remember in this definition of order is the definition of "NO". As long as there is one thing in an area that is unnecessary or not in its proper place, you do not have ORDER. You may approximate order or almost have order, but you cannot say you have order. But why worry so much about real ORDER? Why is it so important anyway? Well, here are a few things ORDER can and will do:

1. Reduces accidents and fire causes.

If you do not believe this, review some accident investigation reports and see how often accidents and fires are caused by things being in the wrong place at just the right time. The major cause of fire, for example, is common housekeeping, or more accurately, failure to do housekeeping.

2. Prevents wasted energy.

How much time is spent working around congested areas or moving items to get the needed material?

3. Maintains greatest use of previous space.

How much space is taken up by things that are rarely used or unnecessary? How much of the stockroom is your work area?

4. Keeps inventory at a minimum.

Why store a year's supply of materials in the work area that are used a day at a time, unless you are in charge of a storeroom?

5. Helps control property damage.

Not only does congestion foster property damage, but why expose material in a production area if it is not necessary?

6. Guarantees good shop appearance.

Orderliness is the first thing visitors to an area notice.

7. Encourages better work habits.

Are you more careful and conscious of your actions in an orderly work area or in a dirty, cluttered and congested area?

8. Impresses the customers.

Where do you prefer to do your buying - from a neat, orderly store or from a dirty, cluttered, disorderly one?

9. Reflects a well-run operation.

In visiting other areas, do you usually feel a neat, orderly area is better managed than a dirty, disorderly, and apparently disorganized one?

10. Minimizes janitorial work.

Which <sup>a</sup> requires less effort to keep clean - one that is neat and orderly or one which is cluttered, congested and in disorder?

Two final qualities of order that are frequently overlooked. First, order is maintained, not achieved. You cannot put an area in order and then forget it. Order must be maintained by the daily, conscious effort

of everyone in the area. Second, order can only benefit you if you have it throughout the workday. If you wait until the end of the day and then get everything in order, what good can it do you for that day?

A program about orderliness carried out by supervision and individual employees can bring big reductions in accidents, store inventories, and wasted time and energy. The sure result of order is greater and safer production of better products at lower costs. Improved production and costs mean increased business and prosperity for the company and its employees.

There is not anything that will waste our time, energy and materials like disorder.