



INTRODUCTION

Workspaces on a ship such as the engine room and cargo rooms can be small, are not always well lit, and have hazards all around that crew must be vigilant of. An interesting piece of information discovered by analyzing the reports in the database is that a very high number of avoidable slip and trip type near-misses were revealed. According to the Mariner Safety Database, the second most reported cause of near-miss slips and trips in interior workspaces is housekeeping.



Good housekeeping entails returning tools to their proper place after use, cleaning up any debris, oil or other mess that results from the job, stowing equipment properly and securing ladders, poles, hoses and lines. Not cleaning up properly after completing a job results in unexpected hazards for those who come behind. Oily rags on a ladder that go unnoticed may have serious consequences; an unsecured ladder may result in injury in rough seas; and in a poorly lit area unexpected hazards only increase the risk of injury to crew in that space.

How does good housekeeping make for a safer ship?

- Keeps ladders, walkways, and decks clear of tripping and slipping hazards
- Keeps head space free of low hanging objects
- Prevents flying objects in rough seas
- Ensures that avoidable hazards are avoided



When acting in the name of safety ensuring that all equipment, spills and debris are removed when leaving the work area seems like the obvious course of action. Yet, housekeeping is a large source of near-miss reports suggesting that more vigilance and safety awareness is necessary. When completing a job for the day, or when it is complete, be mindful to clean up properly to prevent accidents in the future.



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