

# NRMCA Monthly Safety Initiative

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## Housekeeping... It's Far Reaching!

### Benefits of Good Housekeeping

Housekeeping, good or bad, can have a far-reaching impact on the safety of any facility. A clean and well-organized ready mixed concrete plant is much more likely to be a safe workplace that promotes pride and ownership in one's job, while also improving morale. An effective housekeeping plan can be extended beyond plant locations to include office areas or even the cab of a truck while also resulting in improved efficiency and a reduction of waste. One of the most effective methods to ensure proper housekeeping is the principle of 5S. 5S stands for Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize and Sustain and is a structured approach to housekeeping that provides the path to establishing, and more importantly, sustaining a clean and well-organized work area that ultimately provides a safer work environment. Some organizations have begun to go even further and are implementing a 6S methodology which includes "Safety" as the 6th "S". The idea behind 6S is to include safety objectives such as ergonomics into the housekeeping plan in order to further improve safety. Furthermore, housekeeping requirements are contained in multiple OSHA compliance standards that apply to ready mixed concrete plants. By maintaining good housekeeping practices, not only does it create a safe ready mixed concrete plant, but OSHA compliance has also been met.



### How Does Good Housekeeping Improve Safety?

- Fewer slips, trips and fall incidents when walking, working surfaces are clear of clutter and debris
- Less risk of fire hazard when flammable materials are stored correctly
- Reduced chance of strains or sprains when tools and supplies are stored in an organized and easy to access area
- Prevents obstruction of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, emergency exits and eye wash stations
- Well-marked pathways to prevent vehicle-pedestrian collisions
- Effective signage marking danger areas to avoid if not properly trained, such as confined spaces

### Things to Consider with a Housekeeping Plan

- Educate team members on the principle of 5S
- Identify and prioritize areas that would benefit from a housekeeping plan
- Document the process and procedures that will be used to sustain the improvement
- Determine the frequency of cleaning schedules and audits to ensure sustainability



### Resources

OSHA: [General Industry Walking-Working Surfaces Requirements](#)

OSHA: [Walk-Around for Safety Officers](#)

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