



AmTrust North America  
An AmTrust Financial Company

# Safety Zone

## Housekeeping - Grocery

Housekeeping is an everyday but crucial element for any business. Because customers depend on a clean and safe environment, stores must show they use a standard of “reasonable care.” One element of “reasonable care” is routinely inspecting the premises and correcting any hazards within a reasonable amount of time. All employees are responsible for being alert and immediately reporting and correcting hazards. In addition to avoiding injuries, good housekeeping creates a good impression of your store and business.

To keep a store’s associates safe, housekeeping is very important. An employee may be the next person to fall on a wet floor or a greasy surface or injured by a falling object. Clutter,

a lack of access to critical shut-off valves, or incorrectly storing flammables are three hazards that can create injuries. Good housekeeping can help prevent injuries and improve productivity. It is a critical part of a company safety program.

### How to avoid clutter

Remember the saying, “A place for everything and everything in its place.” Here’s how to avoid clutter.

- Place mops and brooms where they are not a tripping hazard.
- Place merchandise pallets and cases in orderly and well-balanced stacks.
- Never block aisles, doors, electrical panels or subpanels, fire extinguishers, or gas or electrical equipment.
- Always return hand tools to a safe place, especially sharp tools such as box cutters.
- Organize racks.
- Place flammables in a separate area to avoid starting a fire.
- Do not use compressor rooms for storage.
- Make sure automatic sprinklers have at least 18 inches of clearance. To be effective, sprinklers require clear areas all around and below.
- Ensure all storage areas on mezzanines have railings and an access gate. Keep the gate closed to help prevent falls.
- Store heavy materials lower than lighter items.
- Store materials straight.
- Do not overstock to prevent falling objects.
- Place ladders and step stools appropriately to prevent them from falling.
- Never overstock pallets or store pallets on their sides. Over-stacking causes employees to overstretch and twist, which creates a safety material handling hazard.

## Slips, trips and falls

Keeping floors clean requires teamwork. Pick up items from the floor. Immediately clean spills. Use a squeegee if a mopped area does not quickly dry. To protect customers and employees from falling, provide the same prompt attention to both customer spills and prep areas.

Watch these areas in particular.

- In front of meat cases
- Produce, where water is a concern
- Center/Grocery
- Front of the store
- Restrooms
- Parking lot, where customers may drop something and not report the spill
- Entrances and exits
- Employee work areas, including the warehouse and backrooms
- Mezzanines
- Loading docks
- Prep areas
- Meat department
- Deli
- Bakery
- Self-serve bars
- Restaurants

## Surface hazards

- Excessive dust on the floors
- Wet surfaces
- Improper floor cleaning or waxing process
- Paper and other debris

To keep mats safe, make sure they are clean, placed flat, laid straight and placed strategically to keep customers from tracking dirt or water from snow or ice into clean, dry areas.

## Cleaning tips

- Make sure the floor dries adequately when employees hose down the meat department floor. Floor cleaning tasks are not complete if slippery conditions remain.
- When cleaning customer spills or dropped glass containers, be sure no greasy film remains.
- If you use a wet mop, place warning cones. Retrieve the cones as soon as the floor is dry.
- When stocking, have a specific place to put the flattened cardboard/cartons, and do not leave cardboard on the floor. It is slippery.
- Employees often rush in food prep areas. Take time, especially during rush hours, to maintain a clean area and prevent incidents. Dust accumulation, especially in the bakery, can cause a fire or even an explosion. Excessive dust also affects machinery and electrical panels.
- In Grocery, a lack of good cleaning can pose a food health hazard.
- Consider storing rarely used or unused equipment more permanently, rather than taking up valuable space in common storage areas.
- Store only frequently used material and equipment in the work area.

Cleanliness and organization create a pleasant and safe work area, and are everyone's responsibility. If in doubt, remember: "A place for everything and everything in its place." Pay attention to details.

### Are You In The Zone?

1. What does "reasonable care" mean?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ create a pleasant and safe work area and area the responsibility of all employees.
3. Housekeeping can help prevent \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, three hazards that can cause injuries.
4. List five ways to avoid clutter that help prevent hazards and injuries.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
5. List four areas to watch to help prevent slips, trips and falls.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
6. List three housekeeping cleaning tips than can help prevent hazards and injuries.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

I have received information on Grocery Housekeeping.

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For additional information and resources on this topic and other safety and risk management subjects be sure to visit the Loss Control section on our website:

<https://www.amtrustgroup.com/small-business-insurance/claims/prevention>

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