26. Is the appearance of the laboratory/shop area neat, orderly and clean?

**Strategies for good housekeeping**

Good housekeeping should be maintained in all work areas. This often involves careful use of limited space by planning ahead for delivery and storage of materials, as well as disposition of unwanted/discarded equipment. Quantities of equipment, supplies and other materials should be ordered in moderation. When received, supplies and equipment should be unpacked and put into storage. Packing materials, boxes and obsolete or abandoned equipment should be removed from the work area by contacting Facilities.

**General Safety**

Poor housekeeping can lead to trip/fall hazards, as well as life/fire safety code violations. Examples of poor housekeeping/life safety code violations includes the storage of materials in aisleways, between laboratory benches, restricted or block exits, cluttered work surfaces, desks and bench tops, as well as blocked emergency equipment. Waste containers of all types should be emptied on a regular basis. This includes SAA’s, sharps and Bio-sharp containers; do not stack containers.

**Walking, working surfaces and aisleways**

Personnel working in laboratory, shop and office areas should clean up minor spills on floors and benches as soon as they occur. Leaving them for others can lead to slips and falls. Leaks from pipes, ceiling or other facilities related equipment should be reported to the local Facilities zone office, immediately. Caution tape, barriers or warning signs should be erected to warn others who may enter the area until such time as the leak has been repaired and the area cleaned. Any items which must be stored in aisle ways should be positioned on only one side. Aisle ways must be maintained a minimum of 36 inches in laboratory areas. Main corridors shall be maintained a minimum of 44 inches width.

**Laboratory cleaning**

It is very important that floors be cleaned on a regular basis; contact the Department of Facilities to schedule custodial service. Before cleaning, the area should be surveyed to ensure worker safety; custodial personnel may need to be closely monitored while working in laboratories. It is very important to remove chemicals and other materials from bench tops prior to floor cleaning to prevent items from being knocked over by cleaning equipment or mop handles. Ensure the containers in SAA’s are completely closed.

**Storage Tips**

Overloading wall shelving should be avoided. Heavy items should be stored on the lowest shelves. Avoid storing power supplies, monitors and CPU’s on standard wall
shelving that is intended for book storage. Wall mounted bookshelves are typically designed to hold 40 pounds per square foot of shelf. Because of this, heavy items should be reserved for free-standing storage shelving that has been designed for that purpose. For general purpose storage, a general rule of thumb is 15 pounds per square foot of shelf.

Storage should be kept a minimum of 18 inches from ceiling or wall mounted sprinkler heads. Liquid chemicals must be safely stored in appropriate cabinets as opposed to open wall/bench top shelving. Storing items on the tops of fume hoods is forbidden. This helps to avoid the risk of falling objects, potential ignition in the event of a fume hood fire. Chemicals should be stored in appropriate storage cabinets when not in use.