

Housekeeping tips to prevent auto garage fires

Good housekeeping is a vital element in an auto garage's fire prevention program. Accumulations of combustible scrap materials and trash can provide a fuel source leading to rapid fire development. Accumulations of oily and flammable materials will increase the likelihood of an intense fire. To control fire exposures, basic housekeeping procedures should be established. Below are a few of the steps you can take to maintain good housekeeping.

General housekeeping

- Keep aisles free of equipment, raw materials, and scrap.
- Equipment and machinery should be arranged for easy cleaning.
- Floors should be cleaned daily to prevent the buildup of dust, oil, waste paper, and scrap.
- Smoking should be prohibited in all work areas and "no smoking" signs posted.

Dust control

- All surfaces including beams, ceilings, and hidden spaces above equipment should be cleaned of dust.
- Dust should be picked up using a vacuum system equipped with static reducing devices.
- Access to shop areas should be restricted.

Flammable and combustible liquids

- Drip pans under equipment should be cleaned daily to prevent the accumulation of flammable liquids.
- Flammable and combustible liquids should be kept in covered containers when not in use.
- Oil and solvent soaked rags used to clean equipment should be disposed of separately from

ordinary trash in a noncombustible container.

- Spills should be cleaned up promptly, and cleaning rags placed in noncombustible containers with lids.
- Area around spray painting booths and paint mixing areas should be kept free of combustibles.
- Old paint, oil, and waste materials should be disposed of promptly.

Trash

- Trash containers should be emptied daily.
- Large trash containers should be stored outside, away from the building, in an area designated for such storage.
- Trash should be separated by type (i.e. wood, paper, oily rags) and placed in non-combustible containers.
- Waste from packaging, such as shredded paper and plastic, should be removed from the work area daily.
- Excess parts, tires, machinery, and unused items should be removed from the premises and placed in storage or disposed of.

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