



**MSHA's Occupational Illness and Injury
Prevention Program
Health Tips**
"Keep the Workplace Clean"

**SAFETY
IS A
VALUE!**

Category : Hygiene and Housekeeping

Mine Type: All

High exposures to toxic dusts and chemicals can lead to long-term health problems. The following tips will minimize exposure to harmful chemicals and dusts. These tips are for miners working around shops and preparation plants, which may have many chemical hazards.

Many chemicals are used in mining and more are being introduced each day. In order to protect one from the hazardous chemicals a miner needs to take simple precautions. Most of the precautions are common sense.

Whenever possible dust should be vacuumed with a HEPA vacuum cleaner instead of being swept up with a broom. Sweeping causes some of the dust to become airborne. Miners can inhale the airborne dust. Further the dust will resettle on surfaces and the miner will need to re-clean the surfaces faster. Vacuuming the dust captures the dust and once the dust is properly disposed of, the dust cannot settle on new surfaces.



If the area is too large to use a vacuum cleaner then wet sweeping is a technique to minimize the amount of dust that gets into the air. Water is sprayed on the area to be cleaned before the miner begins to sweep.

Other housekeeping chores can minimize unnecessary exposure to harmful chemicals. For example, spills should be cleaned up as soon as practical. Leaving a spill can lead to a slipping hazard besides being a health hazard.

Keeping the workplace clean can help miners lower their potential risks to chemical and dust exposures.

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Remember - Safety is a Value that you can LIVE with!