

Safety Matters



State of Delaware Issue CCVIII May 2024
Produced by the Insurance Coverage Office

Understanding the 5 “S” Method

A cluttered and disorganized workplace can have numerous consequences, including reduced productivity, inefficient processes, and serious safety hazards. Organizations across industry lines must have proper housekeeping procedures in place, and the 5S method can help.

The 5S method refers to a series of organizational principles created in the 1950s by Japanese engineer and educator Hiroyuki Hirano. Since its initial debut, this method has been implemented by several large-scale companies—especially those within the manufacturing sector (e.g., Toyota, Harley-Davidson, Ford, Boeing, and Nike). Overall, its steps promote housekeeping practices that streamline workflows, reduce waste, minimize safety issues, and boost operational efficiency. This article provides additional information on the 5S method, its benefits, and best practices for implementation.

Overview of the 5S Method

The 5S method primarily leverages visual cues and standardized protocols to maintain a clean and orderly workplace. There are five main organizational principles associated with the 5S method. Here’s an overview of those principles, also known as the key pillars of a visual workplace:

1. **Sort**— This principle entails clearing clutter and removing nonessential items from work areas. Under the “sort” principle, employees should keep their workstations clean. Further, any item that is damaged or unnecessary should be removed. These items should be tagged with details regarding the date of and reasons for their removal.



2. **Set in order**—This principle pertains to organizing work areas in a way that makes all essential items (e.g., tools and equipment) easy to find.
3. **Shine**—This principle involves conducting routine inspections and cleaning procedures, thereby increasing the likelihood that all work areas and items remain in good condition.
4. **Standardize**—This principle entails effectively communicating and enforcing housekeeping measures to employees. Ultimately, clear workplace expectations should be set across teams and departments, making it easier for staff to identify potential errors or inconsistencies before they escalate into larger problems.
5. **Sustain**—This final principle pertains to regularly reviewing housekeeping measures to ensure their effectiveness and adjusting them as needed based on changes or shifts in workplace exposures, processes, and technology.

The 5S method can benefit organizations in a variety of ways. Key advantages of this method include:



Reduced waste—Organizations can significantly minimize both physical and operational waste by removing clutter and addressing misplaced, damaged, or nonessential workplace items.

Improved safety—Through proper housekeeping measures, organizations can mitigate numerous clutter-related safety concerns—including slip and trip hazards, falling objects, obstructed pathways, emergency exit blockages, and exposure to dangerous materials. By implementing the 5S method, organizations can uphold a clean and orderly work environment, ultimately ensuring productive and safe operations.

Safety Focused

Know the signs of an Earthquake

During an earthquake, you may hear a roaring or rumbling sound that gradually gets louder. You may also feel a rolling sensation that starts gently and, within a few seconds grows violent.

OR

A violent jolt may first startle you. A second or two later, you may feel shaking and struggle to stand up or move from between rooms.

Learn the safe spots

During an earthquake, most deaths and injuries are caused by collapsing building materials and heavy falling objects, such as bookcases, cabinets, and heating units.

- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the safe spots in each room of your home. A safe spot may be underneath a sturdy table away from walls.

Plan and practice what to do if an earthquake strikes by planning and practicing what to do if an earthquake strikes, you and your loved ones can learn to react correctly and automatically when the shaking begins.

- ✓ Involve the entire family in earthquake drills, especially if you have children. Practicing these drills will help you and your loved ones know what to do if you're separated during an earthquake.
- ✓ Make sure you and your children also understand the school's emergency procedures for disasters. This will help you coordinate where, when, and how to reunite with your children after an earthquake.

Drop, cover, and hold on during your earthquake drill

- ✓ **DROP** down onto your hands and knees immediately. This position protects you from falling but still allows you to move if necessary.
- ✓ **COVER** your head and neck (and your entire body if possible) underneath a sturdy table or desk. If there is no shelter nearby, get down near an interior wall or next to low-lying furniture that won't fall on you, and cover your head and neck with your arms and hands. Try to stay clear of windows or glass that could shatter or objects that could fall on you.
- ✓ **HOLD ON** to your shelter (or to your head and neck) until the shaking stops. Be prepared to move with your shelter if the shaking shifts it around.

Create an evacuation plan

If an earthquake happens, you and your loved ones may need to evacuate a damaged area afterward. By planning and practicing for an evacuation, you will be better prepared to respond appropriately and efficiently to signs of danger or directions by civil authorities.

- ✓ Take a few minutes with your family to discuss a home evacuation plan. Sketch a floor plan of your home, walk through each room, and discuss evacuation details. If you live downstream from a dam, know flood-zone information.
- ✓ Plan a second way to exit from each room or area, if possible. If you need special equipment, such as a rope ladder, mark where it is located.
- ✓ Mark where your emergency supply kit (including food, water, first aid) and fire extinguishers are located.
- ✓ Locate where the utility switches or valves are located so that they can be turned off, if possible.
- ✓ Indicate the location of your family's emergency outdoor meeting place.

Create an emergency supply kit

Stock up on emergency supplies that can be used after an earthquake. These supplies should include a first aid kit and emergency supply kits for the home and automobile, including emergency water and food. Store enough supplies to last at least three days.

You should also make a list of important information (like telephone numbers of emergency contacts, insurance information, and important medical information) and gather any important documents (like medical documents, birth certificates, and passports). Store these items in a secure location like a fireproof or waterproof safe. Items for your home.

May's Riddles

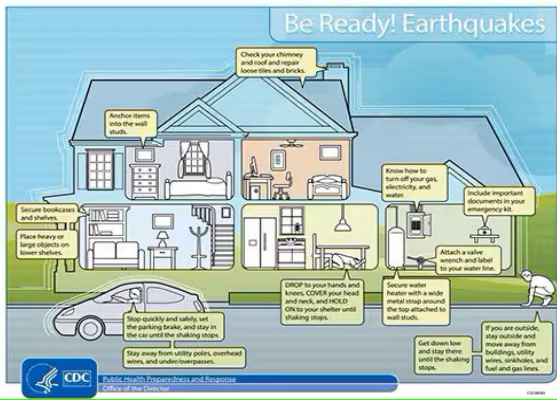
(answers on page two)

1. What do you call a lion who is feeling dandy?
2. Where do bad rainbows go?
3. What do you call a haunted chicken?
4. What do you call a Magician who lost their magic?

Safety Focused cont.

Assemble an emergency supply kit for your home. In addition to your standard emergency supply kit, some additional items that may help after an earthquake include the following:

- ✓ An ax
- ✓ A shovel
- ✓ A broom
- ✓ A rope for towing or rescue
- ✓ Sturdy shoes that can protect broken glass, nails, and other debris
- ✓ Gloves (heavy and durable for cleaning up debris)
- ✓ Fire extinguisher (multipurpose, dry chemical type)
- ✓ A whistle or other signaling device carried in your purse or backpack



Prepare your home for Earthquakes

Tips for Securing Shelves

To keep items from falling off open shelves, attach a wooden or metal guardrail to each shelf. You can also use a fishing line for a less visible alternative.

You should also make sure to place heavy or large objects on lower shelves. Use fastenings to secure some items on their shelves.

Make sure to inspect your home and its surrounding area for any possible hazards and secure them if possible. Remember; anything can move, fall, or break during an earthquake or its aftershocks.

- ✓ Identify potential hazards in each room, including windows and other glass items, unanchored bookcases, furniture that can topple, items on shelves, and areas that could be blocked by falling debris. Secure them, where possible, with “L” brackets, corner brackets, aluminum molding, or eyebolts.

- ✓ Secure cabinet doors by installing sliding bolts or childproof latches.
- ✓ Secure your large appliances (like refrigerators, water heaters, and stoves) with flexible cable, braided wire, or metal strapping. Wrap your water heater and attach it to wall studs.
- ✓ Move heavy mirrors and pictures hanging above beds, chairs, and other places where you sit or sleep. Otherwise, anchor these items with wire through eye screws bolted into wall studs. Or place screws on both sides, top, and bottom of the frame and screw these into the studs.
- ✓ Replace heavy ceramic or glass hanging planters with lightweight plastic or wicker baskets.
- ✓ Identify poisons, solvents, or toxic materials in breakable containers and move these containers to a safe, well-ventilated storage area. Keep them away from your water storage and out of reach of children and pets.



Answers

- 1- Dandelion
- 2- Prism, it's a light sentence
- 3- A Poultry-geist
- 4- Magic ... Ian