



Housekeeping in technical rooms

What is the hazard?

Technical rooms contain important equipment, but are often separated from staffed areas and not kept under observation. There is an increased risk of ignition in these rooms due to the nature of the installations. A fire in such a room, even when contained to the room itself, could result in serious damage and an interruption in business operations.

The storage of combustibles in technical rooms provides the potential for a fire to rapidly develop into a large fire and thus increase both the damage and extend the interruption in business operations.

Housekeeping is central for preventing a fire from spreading and for keeping the impact of a fire to a minimum. It can also help to maintain safe access to the equipment and the installations, which will allow failures to be observed and repairs to be carried out.

How to reduce the risk

Technical rooms contain equipment and installations that are often essential for production, therefore they should be kept free of stored items at all times. These rooms should be kept locked and should only be accessible to authorized personnel. A person with the responsibility for housekeeping should be appointed.



The spare parts for equipment should not be stored in technical rooms, especially if the spare parts are combustible. For example, filters for ventilation equipment should be kept in a separate storage area and only be taken to the technical room on the day of the installation. It is good practice to remove packaging materials before taking the equipment into the room.

If it is essential that documents, i.e. electrical diagrams, are stored in a technical room, they should be kept in a closed steel cabinet.

Lubrication and hydraulic oils as well as other combustible liquids and gases should not be stored in technical rooms. However, if they are constantly needed then the amount stored should be kept to a minimum. Combustible liquids in technical rooms should preferably be stored in metal containers. If only plastic containers are available then these should be kept in metal cabinets. In addition, spill containment should always be provided.

It is recommended, as a minimum measure, that smoke detection is installed in the technical rooms. The rooms should also be included in regular formal self-inspections. Immediate action should be taken and a report about the inspection should be provided to the site management, if and when stored items are observed or other unacceptable practices or conditions are found, for example open doors to the electrical cabinets.

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