

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Materials Storage and Shelving Protocols

1. Purpose

This SOP establishes **materials storage and shelving protocols** to ensure the safe, organized, and efficient handling, storage, and retrieval of materials. The protocol aims to minimize damage, prevent accidents, maximize space utilization, and maintain a safe working environment for all personnel.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees involved in the storage, shelving, and handling of materials within the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- **Supervisors:** Oversee implementation and compliance with the SOP.
- **Staff:** Adhere to procedures outlined in this SOP when handling, storing, or retrieving materials.
- **Facilities/Maintenance Team:** Ensure shelving installations meet safety standards and conduct regular inspections.

4. Procedures

4.1 Shelving Installation

- All shelving units must be installed according to manufacturer specifications and securely anchored.
- Do not place shelving units in areas that block exits or access to emergency equipment.
- Install heavy-duty shelves for high-weight materials as necessary.

4.2 Weight Limits

- Clearly display the maximum weight capacity on each shelving unit.
- Do not exceed posted weight limits. Distribute weight evenly across shelves.
- Store heavier items on lower shelves to prevent tipping.

4.3 Labeling

- Label each shelf and storage area with clear identifiers.
- Materials must have visible labels indicating content, batch/lot numbers, and relevant dates.
- Update labels promptly when contents change.

4.4 Inventory Management

- Organize materials by type, size, expiry date, or other relevant criteria.
- Maintain an up-to-date inventory log, either digital or hardcopy.
- Follow First-In, First-Out (FIFO) or First-Expired, First-Out (FEFO) methods as appropriate.

4.5 Safe Stacking Practices

- Stack materials so that they are stable and do not protrude over shelf edges.
- Do not block aisles, emergency exits, or access pathways with stored materials.
- Avoid stacking materials higher than eye level unless equipped with appropriate retrieval equipment.

4.6 Inspection & Maintenance

- Conduct visual inspections of shelving units and stored materials weekly.
- Immediately report and address any signs of damage, wear, or instability.
- Document inspections and maintenance actions in the inspection log.

5. Safety Considerations

- Wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when handling heavy or hazardous materials.
- Use approved step stools or ladders to access high shelves; do not climb on shelving.
- Keep storage areas clean and free of obstructions at all times.
- Report any hazards or unsafe conditions to supervisors immediately.

6. Documentation

- Maintain records of training, inventory, inspections, maintenance, and incident reports as required by company policy.
- Ensure documentation is accessible and regularly updated.

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	2024-06-01	Initial release	[Your Name]