

## Preventing Slips, Trips & Falls

Did you know that slips, trips and falls are among the leading causes for workplace injuries that result in workers missing time at work? Slips, trips and falls also occur for visitors and volunteers. You play an important role in recognizing and preventing the various risks and hazardous conditions that will help reduce work related injuries. Prevention is a critical goal of every safe and healthy workplace.

### Slips, Trips and Falls

|              | Definition  | Common Causes   |
|--------------|---|---|
| <b>Slips</b> | A sliding motion where the foot or shoe loses traction with the floor surface resulting in a loss of balance.                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wet or oily surfaces</li> <li>• Spills</li> <li>• Weather hazards: rain, snow, or ice</li> <li>• Shoes with poor traction</li> <li>• Running, hurrying, or not paying attention</li> <li>• Loose, unanchored rugs or mats</li> <li>• Flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have the same degree of traction in all areas</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Trips</b> | A stumble, often over an obstacle, causing an individual to lose their balance. This can either be corrected or cause the individual to fall. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstructed view</li> <li>• Poor lighting</li> <li>• An untidy or poorly lit workspace</li> <li>• Clutter in the path of travel (e.g. furniture, equipment, or other items placed in walkways)</li> <li>• Uneven floor surfaces</li> <li>• Wrinkled carpeting or flooring</li> <li>• Uncovered cables/cords</li> <li>• Choosing non-designated pedestrian paths/walkways (e.g. grass, slopes, stepping over barriers)</li> <li>• Running, hurrying, or not paying attention</li> <li>• Parking lot barriers</li> <li>• Climbing or descending stairs</li> </ul> |
| <b>Falls</b> | An event that results in a person coming to rest inadvertently on the ground, floor or other lower level, with or without injury.             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slips and trips</li> <li>• Climbing stairs or using ladders</li> <li>• Negligence or poor housekeeping practices when working on rooftops or scaffolding</li> <li>• Not paying attention or negligence when working near holes or openings in the floor</li> <li>• Not utilizing appropriate fall protection systems such as fall prevention, fall restraint or arrest systems</li> </ul>  |

### Indoor and Outdoor Hazards

| Asphalt  | Tile   | Carpet  | Concrete  |
|--|--|---|---|
| Asphalt covers the parking lots and some walkways. In the winter, snow and ice can accumulate.   | Coming through the entrance there might be tile floor. | There might be a mat on the floor as soon as you step inside. | Concrete steps can be found inside and outside. |
| <b>Each of these surfaces has different conditions that can make it a hazard. Surfaces can be slippery, warped or sagging, inset with drains or damaged.</b> |  |   |   |

## Good Practices are Key to Prevention

- Place feet firmly on the ground before taking a step away from your vehicle.
- Take your time and don't rush.
- Keep your eyes open and be aware of changing surfaces. Watch for cracks, ice or uneven areas in the sidewalk and keep your eyes on where you are going.
- Do not use your cell phone for texting while walking
- Keep your hands out of your pockets to help maintain balance
- Use handrails where provided

### Footwear

- Choosing the right indoor footwear is about more than fashion. Your shoes should be appropriate for the job you are doing and meet the PPE (personal protective equipment) requirements in your area as applicable. The standard is closed toe and heel.
- Appropriate outdoor footwear is key when the weather is wet or snowy. Choose a non-slip sole with good traction for walking into the building over ice and snow.

### Walking from the parking lot

- Always use designated walkways and paths
- Avoid carrying too much at once, even if you have to make more than one trip, or ask someone to help you
- When walking in the parking lot, do not step over the concrete barriers

## Reporting Hazardous Interior and Exterior Work Surfaces

Surface hazards come in many forms - wet or slippery floors, cracks, holes, bumps, carpet trip hazards, snow, ice, uneven walking surfaces, slippery conditions, etc.

If you see something you feel is unsafe (e.g. tripping hazard, slippery floors):

1. **Remove the risk**, if possible (using the wall mounted pads for spills or wet floor signs).
2. **Report any unsafe indoor and outdoor surface hazards** to:
  - Extension 56473 *during regular office hours*
  - Extension 52281 *after hours*
3. **Notify the person you report to you on your shift** regarding the area of concern, as this will help prevent incidents from occurring.

Wall Mounted Pads



Wet Floor Sign

