

Safety Bulletin



Slips / Trips / Falls

Slips can occur when there is too little traction and friction between the footwear and walking surface. Some common causes of slips are caused from:

- Wet or oily surfaces
- Occasional spills
- Weather hazards
- Loose, unanchored rugs or mats
- Flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have the same degree of traction in all areas.
- Hidden slippery surfaces such as ice under snow

Trips can occur when your foot hits an object causing you to lose balance and it may or may not result in a fall. Some common causes of tripping are caused from:

- Obstructed view
- Poor lighting
- Clutter in the way
- Wrinkled carpeting
- Uncovered cables
- Uneven walking surfaces (steps)

Falls typically are the result of a slip and or trip, however, some falls are caused from heights.

Preventing falls due to slips and trips:

Slips and trips result from unexpected and unintended change in contact with the feet and ground or walking surface. Thorough risk assessments, good housekeeping, quality of walking surfaces, proper footwear, and proper walking pace are factors that can prevent fall incidents.

Housekeeping:

One of the most important form of preventing falls and trips is good housekeeping. Some good housekeeping includes:

- Cleaning all spills immediately
- Marking spills and wet areas
- Mopping / sweeping debris from floors
- Removing obstacles from walkways and keeping them clean from clutter
- Tacking and taping down mats, rugs, and carpets that don't lay flat

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- Covering cables that cross walkways
- Keeping walkways and working areas well lit
- Replacing faulty switches and used lightbulbs for clear visibility
- Sanding or salting outdoor areas where pedestrian traffic can occur.

If good housekeeping practices are not upkept, other practices such as the installation of flooring and training on techniques of walking will not be as preventative.

Footwear

Proper footwear is an essential step to preventing fall incidents. In workplaces where workers spend majority of their time on their feet or where the floors can be oily, wet or slippery, proper footwear is a must. No footwear has anti-slip properties for every condition, therefore, it's up to you (with the assistance of your supervisor/Health and Safety team) to determine the appropriate footwear for the task.

How to avoid falling at work?

To reduce the risk of slipping on wet/slippery walking surfaces:

- Take your time and pay attention to where you're going.
- Plan your route and execute it.
- Walk at an appropriate and suitable pace for the task you're doing.
- Walk with your feet pointed outward slightly.
- Make wide turns at corners.

To reduce the risk of tripping:

- Ensure walking areas are free from obstruction and clutter.
- Make sure the flooring or walking surface is in good condition.
- Use the light sources installed that provide enough light for your tasks, where applicable.
- Use a flashlight if you need extra visibility
- Ensure that things you are carrying or pushing don't prevent you from seeing where you're going or what can be in your way (spills, obstructions, etc.)