

Slips, Trips & Falls

Slips, trips and falls are the single largest cause of injuries and lost time in the workplace.

Slips

Slipping is one example of how falls occur, and loss of traction is the leading cause of workplace slips. Slipping hazards are most likely to occur when employees are in a hurry, inattentive, or distracted. Below are some conditions that can lead to slips and falls:

- Floor surfaces that are constantly wet—doorways (during our wet winters)
- Leaks & spills—coffee or water spills, water from snow or rain brought in on boots & shoes, roof leaks, and oil or grease leaking from tools and equipment.
- Floor surfaces—smooth floor surfaces that have been waxed but not buffed or have a wax buildup, tile, smooth concrete or some wood flooring.
- Ice, snow, rain or mud—parking lots, on loading docks, or walkways between buildings.
- Rugs & mats—some rugs lack a no-skid back and can slide on a smooth surface.

Trips

Trips occur whenever your foot hits an object, and you are moving with enough momentum to be thrown off balance. Below are some situations that can lead to trips:

- Trash, unused materials, and objects left in aisles or other areas designed for pedestrian traffic.
- Extension cords, tools, carts and other items that can catch your foot when walking.

Falls

Momentum — Friction + Gravity = Fall

Friction is the resistance between things, such as between your shoes and the surface you walk on. Without friction, you are likely to slip and fall.

Momentum is affected by the speed and size of a moving object.

Gravity is the force that pulls you to the ground once you start to fall.

Preventing Slips, Trips & Falls

- Employees should wear shoes suitable for the conditions in the work area because the soles of shoes can help increase the friction between the shoe and the floor surface.
- Keep work areas, aisles, storage rooms and stairways well-lit. Poor lighting is often a contributing factor to a slip, trip or fall, as employees are unable to see hazards in their path.
- Keep work areas clean. Clutter in the work area, on stairs, or in aisle ways can serve as tripping hazards.
- Keep extension cords, power tool cords, and other loose cords arranged in a manner to prevent people from tripping over them.
- Keep walking surfaces in good condition.
- Keep walkways clear.



