



Slips, Trips and Falls

A janitorial employee was scrubbing the steps and floors with water and a cleaning agent. An observant worker realized that soon dozens of employees would be going down the same steps to exit the building for their lunch break. This person then took the proper action to avert this potentially dangerous situation and set up a wet floor sign.

Do Your Safety Part

Slips, trips and falls constitute the majority of general industry accidents. They cause 15% of all accidental deaths and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities. An unguarded wet floor is just one of the many possible causes. It is important to spot unsafe conditions that could lead to slips, trips and falls, and do what you can to prevent them.

There are various ways to suffer slips and falls while working. You can slip and lose your balance, you can trip over objects left improperly in your walkway or you can simply fall from an elevated position to the ground. To avoid slips, trips and falls, be on the lookout for foreign substances on the floor, such as:

- Deposits of water
- Food
- Grease or oil
- Sawdust
- Soap
- Other manufacturing debris

Even small quantities of these substances are enough to cause a fall.

Good Housekeeping Counts

When entering a building from outside or from areas with debris, clean your footwear thoroughly. Snowy and rainy weather requires a doormat at each entrance to allow for complete wiping of shoes. Avoid running; walk safely and do not change directions too sharply.

Beware of tripping hazards. Trash, unused materials or any object left in walkways designed for pedestrian traffic invites falls. Extension cords, tools, carts and other items should be removed or properly barricaded off. If equipment or supplies are left in walkways, report it to the proper personnel so it can be removed. Also, keep passageways clean of debris by using trash barrels and recycling bins.

Practice Prevention

Walk in designated walking areas. Shortcuts through machine or other manufacturing areas can cause accidents. Concentrate on where you are going – horseplay and inattention leaves you vulnerable to unsafe conditions. Hold on to handrails when using stairs or ramps – they are there to protect you should a fall occur. If you're carrying a heavy load that hampers your ability to properly ascend or descend stairs, use the elevator or find help.

Written by Geary McMinn

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