

Wellness @Work

Winter 2010

Preventing Injuries Due to Slips and Falls

This issue provides basic information on avoiding injuries that are more prevalent in the winter months.

How can you, as an employer, prevent injuries due to slips and falls in the workplace?

- ✓ Put a company policy in place to outline the rules for housekeeping, lighting, and inspections.
- ✓ Make sure protective equipment is in good repair and is used properly.
- ✓ Supervisors must be clear about their responsibilities and they must ensure the rules are followed.

- ✓ Provide training to educate your employees on how to clean up spills, use fall protection equipment, and how to put up guard rails and use covers in the floor, etc.
- ✓ Continuously check to make sure company rules are being followed. Are they working? What needs improvement?
- ✓ If you have an incident in your workplace, investigate immediately and eliminate the cause.
- ✓ Know your legal obligations. Not complying with the law can result in more than injuries, such as— compliance and stop work-orders, prosecutions, fines, and imprisonment.

- ✓ Use salt, sand, or another anti-slip material to keep lots and walkways clear.
 - ✓ Have shovels and gloves available before icing conditions appear.
 - ✓ Ensure workers wear appropriate footwear for conditions.
 - ✓ Provide good lighting and clear path marking in lots and walkways.
 - ✓ Clearly identify steps, ramps, and other elevation changes.
 - ✓ Secure door mats and rugs to prevent slipping or tripping hazards.
 - ✓ Keep work surfaces dry.
- Let's make this winter a safe season!
- For more information on this or any health and safety topic, contact Mary Alice at (616) 459-1560 or maehrlich@med1services.com.



Special Winter Tips

Don't get caught by surprise—monitor the weather and expect slippery conditions.

- ✓ Clear ice and snow before workers need to get in to or out of the parking lot.

MED-1 Services

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 - Health risk appraisals
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- Education
 - CPR/First Aid training
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 - Wellness education
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Wellness @Work

Slips and Falls Cost Us All!

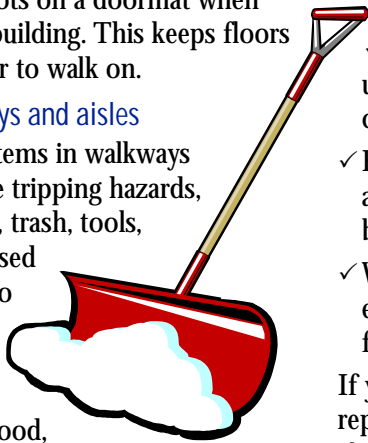
Slips and falls in and around the workplace cause injuries that are easily prevented. It is important to be aware of unsafe conditions. If you are injured in the workplace, everyone suffers including you! Each year, many workers slip or fall in their workplace. The average time lost from a workplace injury—such as a fall—is 4-6 weeks.

Safe parking lots and walkways

Snow, rain, and icy conditions provide the perfect conditions for slippery surfaces. When it is raining or snowing, always wear the right footwear for conditions and clean your shoes and boots on a doormat when entering the building. This keeps floors drier and safer to walk on.

Clear walkways and aisles

Be aware of items in walkways that can cause tripping hazards, such as cords, trash, tools, carts and unused materials. Also take care to clean-up sawdust, soap, water, food, and other items in your workspace.



Pay attention to lighting and pathways

Stay on the designated sidewalks and walkways in the parking lot and your building to avoid hazardous areas.

Follow safety guidelines

- ✓ Don't try to carry heavy loads alone
 - request help or use an elevator when a load is heavy or bulky.
- ✓ Use your company's safe lifting techniques.
- ✓ Take the time needed to do the job properly. Do not take shortcuts.



Use proper equipment

- ✓ Take advantage of handrails on stairs and ramps to protect yourself from falling.
- ✓ Practice ladder safety and only use proper equipment in good condition.
- ✓ Be sure scaffolds are properly assembled and checked for defects before use.
- ✓ Wear your safety harness or other equipment when working near a fall hazard.

If you or a fellow employee fall, report the incident immediately even if you are not seriously injured. By pointing out unsafe conditions, you can save someone else from potential injury.

More Information...

You can always rely on MED-1 to provide information on the health and safety for your work environment. We see your employees every day and know how important health and safety is to you.

Contact Mary Alice Ehrlich or Tammie Milligan at tmilligan@med1services.com.

Effective Prevention Programs

Everyone has a role in preventing slips and falls.

- ✓ Be aware of hazards and report them to a supervisor right away.
- ✓ Follow standards to maintain a safe workplace.
- ✓ Participate in training on keeping your workplace safe.
- ✓ Celebrate success and help make improvements.



Wellness at Work is a informational publication provided by MED-1 Occupational Health System to facilitate health and wellness initiatives for employees.

For more information on any topics presented or to access additional copies of current or past issues, contact Tammie Milligan at 616.459.1570 or go to — www.med1services.com.