

:: Preventing Slips/Trips/Falls ::

Slips, trips and falls can and do occur in the workplace and can be prevented. Slips, trips and falls can hurt your pride or seriously injure you or someone else. Using caution, thinking about the job before you do it, being aware of your work environment and being alert for hazards or tasks that can cause slips, trips and falls are all ways to prevent injuries.

Below are some tips to help you avoid slips, trips and falls while you are working or at home. Don't be a statistic; put these tips into practice and be safe!

Ladders, Stepladders, Stepstools, "Rolling Stairs"

- When using ladders, stepladders, stepstools or "rolling stairs," you should always be careful and aware of your footing, especially if you are climbing a ladder that is attached to a wall, truck or catwalk.
- Remember to always face the ladder, stepstool or rolling stairs when ascending or descending, and never work from the top "step" of a stepstool or stepladder.
- When using rolling stairs, make sure you set the locking mechanism to ensure all wheels are locked.
- Never attempt to move rolling stairs while someone is on them, and don't attempt to move ladders or rolling stairs by "walking" them while you are in place.

Walking Surfaces

- Most slips, trips and falls are the result of unsure footing, and they can occur on any surface that is covered with mud, snow, ice, water, oil, grease or any other slippery substance.
- Ensure that spilled liquids are cleaned up immediately and the area is appropriately marked while you are waiting to have the spill cleaned up.
- Remind employees to report unsafe walking areas, and ensure that leaks from water fountains, roofs or other similar situations are reported for correction as soon as possible.
- Mats, rugs and runners are also hazardous if they can slip or slide, or are torn, curled up or loose. Set a good example by using mats, when provided, to wipe your feet after coming in from a wet outside environment.
- Uneven or defective surfaces, floors littered with trash or other items, telephone or computer wires, electrical cords, open

drawers or anything else that projects from the walking surface may cause a fall.

Stairways

- Stairways present yet another tripping problem, whether they are poorly lighted inside a building or outside from the road to the dock.
- Cartons, boxes, material or other items should not be stored on stairs.
- Hand rails should also be checked periodically to ensure they are not loose and are in good condition.
- Remember to always use hand rails provided when going up or coming down stairs.

Lighting

- Proper lighting, without glare, shadows or violent contrasts between floor areas, is very important.
- Darkened areas can cause people to trip over objects they may not know are there or fall over uneven surface areas or door thresholds.

Proper Shoes

- The condition and type of a person's shoes can also cause a fall.
- Shoes with smooth soles or those that have laces that are too long can contribute to a trip and fall.
- All workers should be encouraged to wear shoes that are not open-toed and that have a "nonslip" or "grip" type sole.

Fall Prevention Tips

- Do not climb over freight or use it as a makeshift platform.
- Do not jump off docks or trucks.
- Carry only what you can reasonably handle while still being able to maintain your balance.
- Stay alert and always expect the unexpected at all levels and on all walking surfaces.