

# Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls in Your Workplace

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Slips, trips and falls cause many work-related injuries and fatalities. While many of these incidents are minor, slips, trips and falls can also cause permanent disability or death. Injuries from slips, trips and falls account for 15% to 20% of all workers' compensation costs. According to data from the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI), injuries from slips and falls were the second most costly workman's compensation claim, with injuries from motor vehicles being the most expensive type of claim. The good news is that most slips, trips and falls can be prevented. In most cases they can be prevented by: paying close attention to what you are doing, watching where you are going, and removing hazards.

The first thing you can do to prevent these types of incidents is to conduct a safety survey of your workplace to identify hazards. Immediately correct any hazards that could lead to slips, trips or falls. Here are some of the hazards that you should always be on the lookout for:

- Steep or unsafe stairways
- Wet and/or slippery surfaces
- Places where ice accumulates
- Uneven or rough walkways or floors
- Areas with poor lighting
- Poor housekeeping, including objects left out on floors, stairs, or in walking areas
- Unsafe ladders
- Extra riders

There are some common sense practices that you can take to avoid slips, trips and falls:

- Always inspect ladders before using them
- Use the right size ladder for the job
- Use both hands when climbing a ladder, keep your body centered between the rails
- Do not stand on chairs or boxes- instead use the appropriate ladder
- Wear shoes with nonslip soles
- Use approved fall protection when working at elevated heights
- Stay away from the edges of loading docks or other drop off areas
- Do not ride on tractors or other machinery as an extra rider
- Clean up spilled liquids immediately and use sand or absorbent materials to reduce the slipping hazard.

Taking your time and not rushing can do a lot to prevent tripping incidents. Avoid running. Take the time to keep your worksite clean and orderly. Don't leave tools or materials laying out where people can trip over them. Don't carry objects that block your vision. Never carry loads that are heavier than you can handle comfortably. Always pay attention to where you are going. Some surfaces, such as outside terrain, cannot be improved. Take extra care when walking in these conditions.

If you would like further information on preventing slips, trips and falls, please give us a call. If you would like to schedule a farm safety survey or on-farm safety training session, please contact me at 800-343-7527, ext 239 or e-mail me at [jcarrabba@nycamh.com](mailto:jcarrabba@nycamh.com). The farm safety surveys

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