



UMIALIK
INSURANCE COMPANY
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Slips, Trips and Falls – Don't Be a Victim

Common Causes

Slips can occur when floors or other working surfaces become slippery due to wet or oily processes, floor cleaning, leaks, or from materials and debris left in walkways. **Trips** can occur due to uneven floor or working surfaces, protruding nails and boards, stretched carpet or bunched floor mats intended to prevent slipping, from holes or depressions in working surfaces, and from step-risers on stairs that are not uniform in height. Both slips and trips can result in falls. In addition, **Falls** can occur when ladders are not maintained properly, when stairways and elevated working surfaces are not designed properly or when employee climb to elevated surfaces such as truck cabs or trailers.

Resulting Injuries:

It's unfortunate that slips, trips and falls constitute a majority of general industry accidents and result in back injuries, strains, sprains, contusions, and fractures. They can also result in death and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities. Falling from even a short distance can have serious consequences.

What can employers and employees do to prevent slips, trips and falls in the workplace?

Employers can prevent slips, trips, and falls in the workplace by adhering to the following guidelines (and making sure that these guidelines are recognized and followed by their employees):

- Where there are wet or oily processes, maintain drainage and provide false floors, platforms, nonslip mats or floor surfaces, or other dry standing places where practicable.
- Use non-skid waxes and/or surface materials coated with grit to create nonslip surfaces in slippery areas such as toilet and shower areas.
- Require the use slip-resistant footwear.
- Clean up floors and working surfaces promptly and frequently when they become wet.
- Try using prudent housekeeping procedures such as cleaning only one side of a passageway at a time.
- Always provide warning signs for wet or slippery floor areas.
- Provide floor plugs for equipment, so power cords need not run across pathways.
- Temporary electrical cords that must cross aisles should be taped or anchored to the floor.
- Aisles and passageways should be sufficiently wide for easy movement and should be kept clear at all times.
- Re-install or stretch carpets that bulge or have become bunched to prevent tripping hazards.
- Eliminate cluttered or obstructed work areas and keep all cabinet drawers closed.
- Provide good lighting for all halls, stairwells, ramps and ladders especially during night hours.
- Make sure stairs have proper handrails, that treads and risers are maintained, and that treads have a slip-resistant surface.
- Instruct workers to use the handrail on stairs, to avoid undue speed, and to maintain an unobstructed view of the stairs ahead of them even if that means requesting help to manage a bulky load.
- Eliminate uneven floor surfaces.
- Make sure elevated storage and work surfaces have guardrails, toe boards and a permanent means of access.
- Make sure that floor drains, pits and other floor opening are covered or protected with guardrails.
- Use only properly maintained ladders with uniformly spaced rungs and nonslip safety feet to reach items. Do not use



stools, chairs or boxes as substitutes for ladders.

- Provide proper ladders and train employees in their safe use and inspection.
- Instruct employees not to climb on racks, equipment or vehicles without proper handholds, ladders or other aids.
- Train employees never to jump across hazards or from elevated surfaces

IMPORTANT NOTICE - The information and suggestions presented by Umialik Insurance Company in this Technical Bulletin are for your consideration in your loss prevention efforts. They are not intended to be complete or definitive in identifying all hazards associated with your business, preventing workplace accidents, or complying with any safety related, or other, laws or regulations. You are encouraged to alter them to fit the specific hazards of your business and to have your legal counsel review all of your plans and company policies.