

Slips, Trips and Falls

According to OSHA, slips, trips and falls constitute **the majority of workplace accidents**. Slip-fall accidents include falls incurred in buildings and on the grounds, but are usually falls on the same floor level or simple falls to the ground, floor, and stairs. Most of these types of accidents can be prevented with improved housekeeping, utilizing appropriate handrails and guardrails, maintenance of walking surfaces, and **remaining alert to the work surroundings**. Regular frequent inspections of working and walking areas should be conducted to identify environmental and equipment hazards which could cause slips, trips and falls. **All slips, trips and falls**, with or without injury, [should be reported](#) to Risk Management, recorded, and thoroughly investigated.

1.0 Safe Personal Practices

- a) Wear the proper footwear for your work and environment and weather conditions
- b) Walk at a reasonable pace and be aware of your surroundings
- c) Avoid poorly lighted travel paths
- d) Be especially cautious when in unfamiliar territory
- e) Do not try to carry loads that are too heavy or that obstruct your view
- f) Use handrails when on stairways. Take stairs at a safe pace and only one at a time
- g) Whenever possible, avoid carrying heavy or bulky objects which obscure your vision and/or require the use of both hands

2.0 General Housekeeping

- a) Keep passageways and stairways free of debris, boxes and other moveable items (e.g., carts, delivery/mail items, recycling containers, etc.)
- b) Maintain floors in a clean and dry condition. Avoid wet mopping during high traffic times. Use wet floor signs to warn others of hazardous conditions. Use walk off mats at entrances to minimize slick floors. During inclement weather, use “Caution Wet Floor” signs at building entrances as appropriate
- c) Ensure floor mats and rugs do not have curling edges
- d) Equip area where wet processes are used (e.g., dishwashing rooms in kitchens) with a means of drainage and gratings, mats, or raised platforms
- e) Clean all spills immediately. Use “Caution – Wet Floor” sign until area is dry
- f) Repair leaking machinery and equipment to prevent slick areas on floors
- g) Avoid slippery floor surfacing materials
- h) Avoid placement of cord in travel paths. Cover cables that cross walkways.
- i) Do not leave cupboards, doors, drawers, file cabinets, etc. ajar
- j) Surfaces in poor repair (e.g., holes, surface upheaval, and broken tiles) shall be repaired or guarded by readily visible barricades, rails or other equally effective means. Report these conditions to [Facilities Management](#)
- k) Report outdoor slippery or uneven areas to [Facilities Management](#) (e.g., ice accumulations or water pooling on sidewalks, buckled sidewalks, etc.)

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- l) Adequate lighting to ensure proper vision is also important in the prevention of slips and falls. Moving from light to dark areas, or vice versa, can cause temporary vision problems that might be just enough to cause a person to slip on an oil spill or trip over a misplaced object
- m) Report burnt out lighting, inadequate lighting, or faulty switches to [Facilities Management](#)

3.0 Ladders & Covers

- a) Use ladders that are in good condition and properly rated. Use them only in the manner intended. Do not use make-shift ladders (e.g., chairs, stools, stacked buckets, etc.)
- b) Ladders should be inspected before each use: check for cracks, loose rungs, ropes, pulleys, splinters and sharp edges
- c) Rungs and side rails of ladders must be kept free of oil, grease and mud: they should be kept dry
- d) Workers should have both hands free to hold the ladder's side rails, not the rungs, when climbing or descending
- e) Always face the ladder when climbing or descending
- f) Ladder safety training is available from EH&S for Creighton University employees
- g) Use covers and/or guardrails to protect employees from the hazards of open pits, tanks, vats, ditches, etc.

4.0 Falls from Vehicles and Equipment

- a) Whenever mounting or climbing on a vehicle or machine, have a good hand-hold before stepping up or stepping out of the vehicle
- b) Always face the vehicle or equipment when mounting or dismounting
- c) Keep steps dry and clean
- d) Unless the operation requires riders, such as on certain planting and harvesting equipment where seats are provided, extra riders should never be permitted. Riding on tractor fenders, draw-bars on equipment, or the bed of a truck is an invitation for disaster
- e) Be aware of inclement weather conditions and surfaces when exiting your vehicle (e.g., ice, wet surfaces, uneven surfaces, etc.)

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