

RISK CONTROL CONSULTING

Slips, Trips and Falls

What causes slips, trips and falls?

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, from 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, and when stairways and elevated working surfaces are not designed properly.



What types of injuries can occur?

According to OSHA, slips, trips and falls constitute the majority of general industry accidents and result in back injuries, strains and sprains, contusions, and fractures. Additionally, they cause 15 percent of all accidental deaths and are second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities.

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

- Repair floor surfaces that are uneven or damaged.
- 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 no-skid waxes and surfaces coated with grit to create nonslip surfaces in slippery areas such as toilet and shower areas.
- Use slip-resistant footwear.
- Clean up floors and working surfaces promptly and frequently when they become wet.
- Use prudent housekeeping procedures such as cleaning only one side of a passageway at a time.
- Provide warning signs for wet 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.
- Frequent workspace inspections and observations.

This Alliant Risk Control Consulting fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.

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