

Slips, Trips and Falls - Safety Talk Handout

WHAT'S AT STAKE

You can slip, trip and fall in all kinds of workplaces, from offices to construction sites. Falls are the leading cause of injuries in North American workplaces.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

Most workplace falls which cause injury or death are falls from the same level, not from heights.

EXAMPLE

You may be in a hurry and run down a flight of stairs, or walk a corridor while reading instructions. You might slip on a slick surface and suddenly your feet go out from under you. Falls can also be caused by tripping on an obstacle - your feet get caught but your body keeps on going.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Appropriate clothing

Don't wear shoes with loose soles. When working on slippery surfaces or in icy weather, wear non-slip soles. Be aware that overly long, loose pant cuffs are a tripping hazard.

Adequate lighting

Report burned-out lights. Turn on lights before entering an area.

Clear paths

If you see something in an aisle such as litter or extension cords, move or report them. Also watch for loose or torn carpeting, mats or runners. Don't store things on or near stairways. Watch out for unexpected hazards such as unguarded floor openings. Report them so they can be correctly covered and guarded.

Respect slickness

Obey signs such as "Caution: Wet Floor." Clean up spills immediately. When you come indoors from rain or snow, your wet footwear slides more easily. Newly waxed and high gloss floors are also hazards. On slippery or rough surfaces, take small steps and walk slowly.

Walk safely

Keep your head up. Don't run down a hallway. Never engage in horseplay. Use stairways' handrails. When carrying a load, make sure you can see over or around it.

Office smarts

Don't tip back in a chair. Chairs should have five legs to prevent tipping. Keep drawers of desks, cupboards and filing cabinets closed.

Elevate wisely

Don't stand on makeshift platforms such as a chair on top of a desk. Instead, correctly use a stepstool, ladder or scaffold.

Working at heights

Be sure to use the required fall protection equipment and all safe procedures when working at heights. Many falls from heights are actually caused by tripping or slipping.

FINAL WORD

Be aware of fall hazards, and repair or report them promptly.