

Slips, Trips and Falls: It's Icy Out There!

Slips, trips and falls are second only to motor vehicle accidents as the most frequent cause of workplace injuries. Slips, trips and falls can result in head injuries, back injuries, broken bones, cuts and lacerations, and strains and sprains. A slip occurs when there is too little traction between the shoe or boot and the walking surface. Included among the many situations that may lead to slips, trips and falls is inclement weather. The following tips are designed to help prevent injuries caused by ice and snow, and can apply to you both at home and at work.

For the Employer

Prevent falls in the workplace and on your property by making a commitment to keep outside walks clear of ice and snow and indoor areas dry. This includes:

- Develop a formal shoveling and salting policy to cover inclement weather events. The policy should cover roads, walks, stairs, ramps, parking lots and building entries.
- Contract with a reputable snow removal company to clear parking lots and other large areas.
- Schedule regular inspection of snow blowers and other snow removal equipment before the first flurry falls.
- Tune in to weather warnings and alerts. Inform employees in advance of a weather event and provide periodic updates.
- Prevent dangerous ice buildup by spreading salt before snow is compacted by foot traffic or melts and refreezes.
- Place skid-resistant floor mats and boot scrapers near doorways.
- Post signs near entrances requesting individuals wipe their shoes thoroughly.
- Clear snowmelt puddles in a timely manner.
- Post warning signs in areas where black ice forms.
- Realize that snow removal from a roof entails a number of potential hazards. Use extreme caution when clearing icicles from overhead.



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Your Safety is Important...

Remember that employees who are removing snow should be monitored, physically fit, and not work alone. In addition, motorized equipment must be operated as designated by the manufacturer with all safety equipment in working order. This equipment often requires personal protective equipment, including ear plugs.

For the Employee

- Wear appropriate footwear for the conditions. Rubber or neoprene soles provide more traction than leather or plastic. If necessary, bring a change of shoes to work. Take smaller steps and point your toes out when walking on snow.
- Wipe shoes or boots upon entry into buildings.
- Stay on cleaned and level paths; avoid taking shortcuts.
- Walk around rather than through hazardous areas.
- Give the right of way to all snow removal equipment.
- Take extra precaution getting in and out of vehicles. Keep at least one hand on the steering wheel or grab bar to maintain stability.
- Avoid carrying heavy or bulky items.
- Take extra precaution when walking at night to avoid black ice.

Your safety is important. Be particularly conscious of unsafe conditions or behaviors in inclement weather, and report any safety-related concerns to your supervisor.



SafetyConnection: Slips, Trips and Falls: It's Icy Out There!

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