



Weekly Safety Briefings

Week 12 – March 13-17, 2023
Avoiding Slips, Trips and Falls in the Workplace

Introduction

I'm willing to bet nearly everyone who is reading this safety brief has experienced a slip, trip or a fall. Sometimes on a completely flat surface for no reason other than daydreaming or not paying attention to your surroundings. These events are unavoidable, however with the proper practices and situational awareness, these incidents can be greatly reduced, and your workplace can avoid more serious injuries. This week we will discuss why it is important to talk about slips, trips and falls, common causes, and some best practices to reduce these incidents in your workplace.

Monday –Why is This Important?

Today we are going to discuss why taking action to reduce slips, trips and falls in your workplace is worth your time and effort. According to the department of labor, slips, trips and falls account for the majority of general industrial accidents. To break it down further, slips, trips and falls account for:

- 15% of all accidental deaths per year.
- About 25% of all reported injury claims per year.
- More than 95 million lost workdays per year which is about 65% of all workdays lost.

Tuesday– Common Causes of Slips, Trips and Falls

In general, slips and trips occur due to a loss of traction between the shoe and the walking surface and falls due to contact with a fixed or moveable object. Being aware of these common causes will hopefully help identify and reduce or prepare for these conditions.

- Wet or greasy floors
- Dry floors with wood dust or powder
- Uneven walking surfaces
- Loose flooring, carpeting or mats
- Transition from one floor type to another
- Missing or uneven floor tiles and bricks
- Damaged or irregular steps; no handrails
- Sloped walking surfaces
- Shoes with wet, muddy, greasy or oily soles
- Clutter
- Electrical cords or cables
- Open desk or file cabinet drawers
- Damaged ladder steps
- Ramps and gang planks without skid-resistant surfaces
- Metal surfaces — dock plates
- Weather hazards — rain, sleet, ice, snow, hail, frost

Wednesday – Tips for Reducing Slips, Trips and Falls

Now that we've identified some of the common causes of slips, trips and falls, let's discuss some tips for eliminating these conditions or preparing for the ones that are can't be removed.

- Maintain good housekeeping practices – good house keeping practices go hand in hand with safety
- Reduce wet and slippery surfaces – if you see a wet area take action, cleaning that area could save you or a co-worker from taking a nasty fall.



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- Avoid creating obstacles in aisles and walkways – something as simple as making sure equipment, product and tools are in the correct location could prevent a serious injury.

Thursday – Tips for Reducing Slips, Trips and Falls Cont.

3 tips for reducing slips, trips and falls is not nearly enough so today we are giving 3 more! Here are some more tips for reducing these types of incidents in your workplace.

- Create and maintain proper lighting – poorly lit areas make spotting obstacles in your path difficult.
- Wear proper shoes – wearing footwear appropriate for the task and surface condition is critical in preventing injuries in the workplace.
- Mind on Task – This can be the most difficult of all the tips to implement but is arguably the most important. Keeping focused on the task at hand and having situational awareness is important not only to prevent slips, trips and falls but also nearly all workplace accidents.

Friday – Open Discussion

Now that we've discussed why reducing slips, trips and falls in your workplace is so important, common causes for these types of incidents and tips for reducing conditions that would cause these injuries, let's discuss slips, trips and falls in your work areas.

- Have you ever experienced a slip, trip or fall in your work area due to any of the causes listed above or any other cause?
- Have you noticed a high amount of slip, trips or falls in your area?
- What could you and your team members do to reduce the risk in your department?