

Nearly all slips or falls have one or more of these factors as a cause:

- Substandard walking surfaces;
- Slippery surface contaminants, such as oil or soap;
- Footwear;
- Walking style of the person.

Proper housekeeping and lighting of working and walking surfaces can prevent most slips, trips, and falls. Sometimes surface contaminants can be very difficult to recognize as a hazard and once the hazard is noticed, must be cleaned up to prevent any risk of injury. Wearing the proper footwear for current weather conditions, as well as the surfaces being traveled, is important to prevent slips, trips or falls, and reduce fatigue.

Incidents that can occur on walking and working surfaces:

1. Trips occur when an obstruction catches the worker's foot and causes him or her to stumble forward. Tripping hazards include cords, equipment, uneven floor mats, and unseen or unexpected objects. Good housekeeping practices can help prevent these types of incidents.
2. Slips occur when an individual slides along a surface causing a loss of balance. Slipping hazards include wet, icy, greasy, or soiled ground or floors. Wearing the proper footwear, such as sturdy work boots and slip resistant shoes help prevent these types of slip injuries in the workplace. Be mindful if you see a substance on the floor to clean up any spills and prevent an injury to yourself or others.
3. A fall can happen from any surface higher than four inches such as ladders, hydraulic lifts, large equipment, elevated walkways, ramps, or platforms. The majority of falls occur from heights less than 10 feet, so safety precautions need to be taken, even at lower heights.

Safe practices for individuals to avoid a slip, trip or fall:

- Be aware of the surface conditions you are walking on, take extra caution on uneven or gravel surfaces.
- Utilize handrails or grab bars in areas where there are stairs or changes in elevation.
- Use 3 points of contact when mounting or dismounting equipment (1 hand/2 feet) or (2 hands/1 foot).
- In wet or icy conditions, take smaller steps and try to ensure your torso stays balanced over your feet.
- Use slip-resistant matting or provide textured surfaces in potentially wet areas.
- Minimize distractions to remain alert to hazards and avoid carrying bulky items that block your view.
- Remove obstructions from travel areas, such as extension cords, power cords, hoses, boxes, or tools.
- Stay alert to parts projecting from machines or equipment.

Remember if you see a hazard, notify your manager or supervisor and take action to prevent an incident from occurring.

See Something Say Something Do Something

Safety Begins with Teamwork