Slips, Trips and Falls

It’s probably happened to most of us. That momentary lapse of attention, thinking about a personal problem or distraction by an activity that ends in a slip, trip or fall. A stumble down a stairway. A trip over an uneven surface. Slipping on the ice. It can lead to a variety of regrettable events ranging from a simple bruised shin to an extremely serious injury. It’s just one of a number of conditions and situations that set the stage for slips, trips and falls in the workplace.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, slips, trips and falls make up the majority of general industry accidents, which account for:

- 15% of all accidental deaths per year, the second-leading cause behind motor vehicles
- About 25% of all reported injury claims per fiscal year
- More than 95 million lost work days per year — about 65% of all work days lost

In general, slips and trips occur due to a loss of traction between the shoe and the walking surface or an inadvertent contact with a fixed or moveable object which may lead to a fall. There are a variety of situations that may cause slips, trips and falls:

- Wet or greasy floors
- Uneven walking surfaces
- Loose flooring, carpeting or mats
- Missing or uneven floor tiles and bricks
- Damaged or irregular steps; no handrails
- Sloped walking surfaces
- Clutter
- Electrical cords or cables
- Open desk or file cabinet drawers
- Damaged ladder steps
- Weather hazards — rain, sleet, ice, snow, hail, frost

Here are six guidelines to help you create a safer working environment.

1. Create Good Housekeeping Practices
2. Reduce Wet or Slippery Surfaces
3. Avoid Creating Obstacles in Aisles and Walkways
4. Create and Maintain Proper Lighting
5. Wear Proper Shoes
6. Control Individual Behavior

It’s ultimately up to each individual to plan, stay alert and pay attention.

Officer’s signature:

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