

Safety Newsletter

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ISSUE

"Self-insured Workers' Compensation Fund Members"

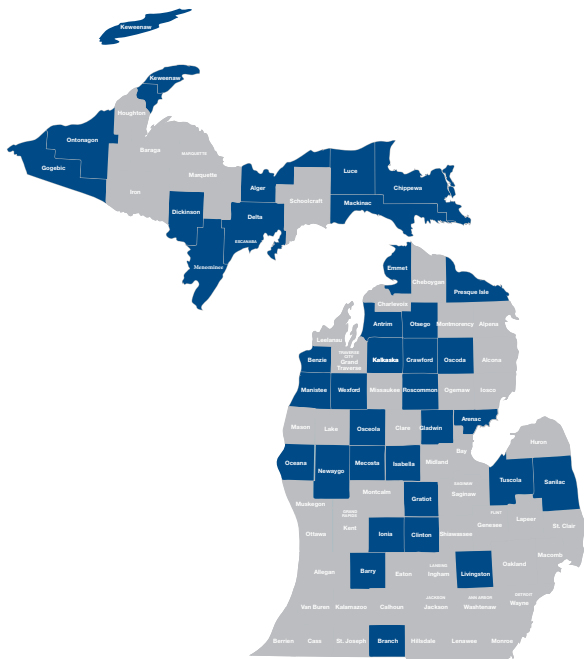
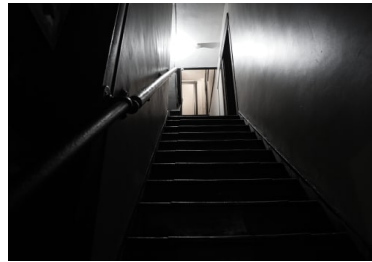
Slip and Fall Safety

Recognizing Slip and Trip Hazards?

The Deadly Quarter Inch

Take a moment right now to look at the ground around you. Cracks, elevation changes, pens or pencils on the ground, spilled binder clips, curled up rugs, worn out carpets, cables and cords, and anything else that is a quarter inch or taller is a significant concern for trip hazards! Every year, thousands of people, just like you, trip over these exact type of things.

These types of injuries sent over 6.8 million people to the hospital in 2020 alone, according to the National Safety Council. Of this nearly 7 million serious accidents, over 42,000 of them resulted in death (across home and work accidents). Billions of dollars are spent on medical bills, workers' compensation, and long-term care for those who never heal fully.



The Unseen Hazards

To a somewhat trained eye, slip hazards and trip hazards are fairly easy to identify: A cord draped over the ground, coffee spilled in the break room, a carpet transition into cement flooring. But what about the hazards that can't be seen? Lighting is incredibly important to hazards that can't be seen. Lighting should be of a natural light color, plenty bright enough (but not too bright), and in all covered areas -such as indoors, under canopies, near entrances, and anywhere else where there is high foot traffic or potential for trip hazards.

Are Your Shoes a Hazard?

"Dress for success" means a couple different things, depending on who you ask. When it comes to safety, wearing shoes that have good support, good traction, plenty of ankle support when walking outside on uneven terrain, and can properly fit your feet is essential. Dress shoes may be right for the job if your job involves 100% indoor work in an extremely professional manner, but if its winter, or you spend any time outside during your work day, or simply just spend time on your feet, switch to a shoe that focuses on your safety rather than looks. There are plenty of options available on the market for shoes that look professional enough, but have great traction, support, and provide protection.

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Don't Let Ice Slip Your Mind

It should be snow surprise that ice is the most common contributor to accidents in colder months.

Whether it is black ice on the road, hidden ice under the snow, or the unsalted sidewalk, the slippery hazard should be anticipated anywhere and everywhere when temps drop near 32 degrees.

How to Walk on Ice

Our normal stride is typically a foot in front of us and a foot behind, with our center of gravity between the 2 feet. Doing this while walking on ice is guaranteeing a slip and fall.

Instead, keep your center of gravity over your foot that is in contact with the surface.

Once your second foot moves forward and makes full contact with the ground, shift your weight over to that foot. Walk flat-footed with your arms out to help keep your balance. This is sometimes referred to as walking like a penguin.

Get a Grip!

Boots or Shoes should have good tread. Your standard everyday sneakers are horrible for winter tractions.

Wearing the same work shoes that you wear in summer, but during winter, will greatly reduce the usable lifespan of those shoes.

Most work shoes and boots are not designed for the cold temperatures and salt.

Heavy-duty nylon, Gore-Tex, polyurethane, and other waterproof materials are preferred for shoe or boot materials.

Ice cleats, trekkers, or grips are excellent ways to protect yourself while working in the outdoors.

Supervisors should have ice cleats available.

If shoveling, working out side that involves walking in the snow or ice, or anything similar, ice cleats should always be worn.



Preventing Slip and Falls

Clear walkways, stairs, and lobbies of anything that might be a tripping hazard, such as cords, wires, empty boxes, and clutter. Make sure that floor mats lay flat rather than wrinkled or bunched. Use handrails when you walk up and down steps. Before using any ladder or stepladder, make sure it opens fully.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

You can slip when you lose your footing, you can trip when you catch your foot on or in something, and you fall when you come down suddenly. Spills, ice, snow, rain, loose mats, rugs, and stepladders are some of the common causes of slips, trips, and falls. In addition, poor lighting and clutter can cause injuries such as sprains, strains, bruises, bumps, fractures, scratches, and cuts.

Tips to Stay Safe

If you see something you might slip or trip on, tell your supervisor right away. Clean up spills and anything slippery. Check with your supervisor about how to use cleaning products. Don't use cleaners that could make the floor slippery. Clear walkways, stairs, and lobbies of anything that might be a tripping hazard, such as cords, wires, empty boxes, and clutter.

Make sure that floor mats lay flat rather than wrinkled or bunched.

Use handrails when you walk up and down steps.

Before using any ladder or stepladder, make sure it opens fully.

Check that ladder extensions are fully locked and that the ladder legs are stable on a flat, non-slippery surface.

Clean off any slippery material on the rungs, steps, or feet of a ladder before you use it. Don't go over the load limit noted on the ladder.

Facts

Slips, trips, and falls are common causes of injuries in retail stores.

Falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination and extension) are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries.

What are the 5 elements of falls safety?

The 5 steps of fall prevention

Identify the risks. There are many potential hazards present when working at heights, particularly pertaining to the risk of falling from an elevated surface. ...

- Avoid the risk. ...
- Control the risk. ...
- Respond to incidents. .
- Maintain risk prevention.

What are the safety rules for falls and slips?

7 Tips for Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls

- Practice good housekeeping. A slip-free workspace begins with housekeeping. ...
- Provide adequate lighting in walking areas. ...
- Install safety signs. ...
- Clean spills immediately. ...
- Make sure proper footwear is worn. ...
- Maintain and improve floor quality. ...
- Implement safety plans and protocols.

What is the OSHA standard for slip and fall?

OSHA's primary standard for slip, trip, and fall hazards is the General Industry Walking-Working Surface standard (29 CFR 1910 Subpart D, which includes §1910.21-30). Related Construction Industry standards are scattered throughout §1926, including Subparts C, L, M, and X.

What is the OSHA standard for slip and fall protection?

OSHA requires that fall protection be provided at elevations of:

- Four feet in general industry workplaces,
- Five feet in shipyards,
- Six feet in the construction industry and
- Eight feet in longshoring operations.

