

## STAY SAFE BULLETIN

### Same Level Falls: Trips and Slips

Falls account for 15-20% of all lost time accidents in the Canadian workplace and represent some 60,000 annual injuries. Same level falls, such as slips and trips, account for 60% or more of all fall related injuries. This category of falls does not include falls from heights, or different levels such as ladders or stairs.

All workers are exposed to trips and slips, at any workplace:

- Slips occur when there is too little traction or friction between the footwear and the walking surface.
- Trips occur when your foot strikes an object causing you to lose your balance and fall.

### **How Slip and Trip Hazards are encountered in the Workplace**

Common causes of slips include:

- Wet or oily surfaces and occasional spills
- Weather hazards
- Loose unanchored ground cover, mats or rugs.

Common causes of trips include:

- Obstructed views
- Poor lighting
- Clutter in the walking path
- Uneven walking surfaces

### **Controlling the Hazards**

The slip and trip hazards, which are likely to be encountered in a particular workplace, should be incorporated into standard inspections and hazard assessments.

### **Best Practices**

Train and educate workers on their responsibility to follow safety procedures. Encourage a culture of continuous hazard identification and mitigation. Ensure that supervisors are carrying out formal and informal inspections and observing worker safety behavior.

**“DON’T FALL DOWN ON THE JOB”**

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### Emergency Preparedness and Response – Evacuations

The evacuation of a workplace is part of an Emergency Response Plan. A hazard or risk assessment should be used to determine the likely emergencies that may take place in the workplace. The nature and location of the work that you might be performing at the time an emergency is declared will help to determine your evacuation plan requirements.

Some workplace considerations that will affect your evacuation plan might include:

- Where your workers are physically located
- Ability to notify workers of an emergency
- Hazardous materials stored or in-use
- Workers requiring assistance to be moved
- Specialized equipment required to evacuate workers

Some key components of the evacuation portion of an emergency response plan are:

- Activating the emergency plan
- Alerting workers and ordering the evacuation
- Establishing the evacuation command and communication structure
- Confirming that the evacuation is complete (headcount)
- Attending to the needs of the evacuees
- Sounding the all clear or releasing the evacuees with instructions.

Workers should have a means to declare an emergency and initiate an evacuation. The command and communication structure must be put in-place quickly to assist with the evacuation. Evacuees must be cared for and provided with instructions on where to go after they have assembled for a headcount.

Every person who has a role in the evacuation plan must be trained to perform that role. All workers must be trained to recognize and respond to evacuation alarms and notifications. Procedures must be in-place to account for all employees, visitors and contractors who might be at a worksite.

Drills are the single most important planning tool of any evacuation plan. These should include sounding of alarms for familiarization, tabletop exercises and live evacuation drills. All exercises should be followed by post-drill assessments and improvement plans.

Knowledge and practice are the keys to effective evacuation plans

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