

Slip, Trip, and Fall

Prevention Plan

Falls are one of the leading causes of workplace injuries and workplace deaths. This plan is designed to reduce exposures to slip, trip and fall hazards to DHS employees, visitors and guests.

There are numerous interrelated components to this slip, trip and fall prevention plan.

- Employee Awareness of Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention Methods
- Good Housekeeping Standards
- Proper and Timely Ice and Snow Removal Procedures
- Walking Surface Materials, Finishes Installation, Lighting, and Maintenance
- Proper Footwear
- Safe Walking Practices
- Thorough Accident Investigation with Good Corrective Actions
- Periodic Inspections of Walking Surfaces

Responsibilities

Management Responsibilities

- Ensure slip, trip and fall prevention practices and principles are considered when building, renovating or expanding facilities.
- Evaluate Supervisors annually to ensure they are carrying out their responsibilities under this plan.
- Ensure that incidents are fully investigated and corrective actions taken to prevent recurrence of slip, trip and fall incidents.
- Set a good example by following established safety rules and recommended practices.

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Assure this plan is adhered to and that all employees follow procedures and policies in this plan.
- Set a good example by following established safety rules and recommended practices.
- Promptly correct any unsafe behavior
- Provide employees with appropriate tools, equipment and materials in accordance with slip, trip and fall best practices.

- Investigate all incidents in your area, implement appropriate corrective actions, and report your findings to management.
- Discuss with managers and Safety Administrator changes that will improve slip, trip, and fall prevention efforts.

Employee Responsibilities

- Follow good housekeeping guidelines
- Use the appropriate footwear for the conditions
- Follow safety rules, safety standards and training received regarding slip, trip, and fall prevention.
- Report all injuries and near misses to your supervisor promptly, regardless of how serious.
- Make suggestions to your supervisor or management about changes you believe will improve slip, trip and fall prevention efforts.
- Effectively remove ice and snow in accordance with established procedures.

Safety Administrator Responsibilities

- Provide the employee awareness information (posters, InfoLink information, training) as described in the Employee Awareness portion of this plan.
- Be a resource regarding slip, trip and fall prevention for new and existing facilities.
- Assist in evaluating areas where slip, trip and fall hazards are prevalent and provide suggestions to help abate noted deficiencies.
- Assist with the accident investigation process for incidents and near misses and with the development of appropriate corrective actions.
- Review the Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention Plan annually for effectiveness and update as necessary.

Employee Awareness

A variety of methods will be used to raise employee awareness of slip, trip and fall hazards and best practices for avoiding slips, trip, and falls. Methods for raising employee awareness include, but are not limited to:

Posters

- Posters regarding slip, trip and/or fall prevention techniques will be posted on bulletin boards and in other areas where they will be conspicuous and easily viewable by employees.
- Posters will be switched out at least quarterly and will cover a variety of topics such as winter fall prevention, distractions, proper footwear, housekeeping, and safety on stairways.
- Source for posters include the MnSafe Safety Posters website and the MnSAFE Slip, Trip, Fall Prevention Page.

InfoLink

- Suggestions for preventing slips, trips and falls will be posted on infoLink at least quarterly.

- Suggestions will cover good housekeeping, distractions, seasonal concerns such as ice and snow, and variety of applicable topics.
- Suggestions for winter fall prevention will be posted on InfoLink by mid-November annually.

Training

- New employees will receive instruction on slip, trip, and fall hazards and prevention during new employee orientation.
- Viewing of slip, trip and fall prevention information on InfoLink and in the posters will also be considered part of training.

Housekeeping

The following housekeeping guidelines should be followed to minimize the risk of slips, trips and falls.

- Spills should be cleaned up immediately. If the spill is hazardous or requires special cleanup procedures, employees should contact their supervisor so the spill can be cleaned up properly.
- Desk and file cabinet drawers should not be left open when not in use. Leaving these open when not in use creates an unnecessary trip hazard.
- Aisles and walkways should be kept clear of cords, cables, boxes, paper on the floor and other trip or slip hazards. Storage in aisles and walkways is not allowed.
- Employee work areas should be free of objects on the floor or that protrude out and that are trip or slip hazards. These objects can be but are not limited to paper on the floor, boxes or other not located in a proper storage place, and cords and cables that are not tucked under desks or someplace where they will not be trip hazards.
- Exits and exit routes must not be blocked.

Ice and Snow Control

Proper snow and ice control procedures must be followed to reduce the chances of winter related slips, trips and falls.

- Have a snow and ice control plan and assign responsibilities in advance.
- Start snow and ice control operations early.
- Pre-treat sidewalks and parking lots, based on weather forecasts.
- Use the correct chemicals for the condition. Some chemicals are temperature sensitive and work best when applied properly.
- Use the correct equipment (broom, plow, chemical spreader, etc.).
 - Products that are available from MINNCOR can be found at [Minncor Ice Melt Products](#).
- Know the correct spread rate for the chemicals you are using.
- Know, document and monitor melt and refreeze areas — areas that are likely to refreeze first because of shade, temperature, etc.
- Monitor weather forecasts and outdoor areas regularly to better determine when and how often snow and ice removal is necessary.

- Know shift change times and perform ice and snow removal accordingly.
- Make sloped walkways and ramps a priority during ice and snow events.
- Clear sidewalks, parking lots, entrances and other areas of snow continually as long as snowing continues.
- Provide self-help chemicals at strategic locations so building inhabitants can use them to provide emergency treatment as needed.

Walking Surfaces

To reduce the opportunities for slips, trips, and falls to occur, walking surfaces should be kept in the best condition possible, should be made of or covered by the appropriate material, and should be properly illuminated. There are three broad categories of walking surfaces: indoor walking surfaces, outdoor walking surfaces, and stairways and ramps

Indoor walking surfaces

- Floors should be made of materials that are slip resistant or that have slip resistant treatments applied to them.
- Floor surfaces and floor coverings should be appropriate to the operations in the area.
- Floors should be maintained in good condition.
 - Broken or missing tiles should be replaced
- Any deficiencies with flooring should be corrected immediately.
- Carpets should be properly maintained and in good condition.
 - Carpets should not be buckled, loose or frayed and should have no upturned edges.
 - Worn carpet that can cause slips or trips should be replaced.
 - Any deficiencies with carpeting should be corrected (carpet should be repaired or replaced) immediately.
- Carpets should be secured to the floor.
- Walk off mats should be placed at entrances to the building so that people entering the building can dry their feet when they enter.
- Walk off mats should be placed in a manner where they are not trip hazards.
- If pedestrian traffic leaves wet foot prints when stepping off the walk off mat, the mat needs to be replaced with a dry one or an additional walk off mat needs to be placed at the end of the first one.

Outdoor Walking Surfaces

- Sidewalks, parking lots and other outdoor walking surfaces should be free of depressions, potholes, cracks and unevenness.
- Any deficiencies with outdoor walking surfaces should be corrected immediately.
- Snow and ice should be removed promptly (see Snow and Ice Control section of this plan for more information)

Stairways & Ramps

- Stairways and ramps should be free of cracks, breaks, holes and other defects.
- Correctly placed handrails should be in place at all stairways and ramps.
- Handrails should be properly secured and should not be loose.
- Stairways should not be too steep.
- Ramps should have the correct rise and run according to ADA guidelines.
- Outdoor stairways and ramps should have timely ice and snow removal.

Lighting

- Lighting for all walking surfaces should be adequate for safe walking.
- Emergency lighting should be adequate for building residents to exit safely during emergencies.
- Exterior lighting should be checked at least quarterly to ensure it is working.
- Diffusers should be kept clean.
- Burned out fixtures should be repaired immediately.

Proper Footwear

Following safety guidelines for footwear will help reduce the risk of a slip, trip, or fall.

- Footwear should have good tread.
- Footwear should be appropriate for the conditions.
 - During snowy or icy conditions, wear winter boots with good tread into the office and change to appropriate shoes once inside.
 - If working in potentially oily or greasy environments, footwear that appropriate for those conditions (shoes with oil-resistant soles) should be worn.
 - Safety shoes suppliers or footwear manufacturers can be consulted for advice and assistance in selecting the appropriate footwear.
- Footwear should be kept clean and in good conditions.
- Safety footwear provided by DHS should be replaced before the treads come too worn, making the footwear a slip hazard.
- Footwear that will be used regularly in cold environments should be appropriately insulated.
- Footwear should be inspected regularly for any damage and worn or defective footwear should be replaced or repaired immediately.
- Footwear with leather or smooth-surfaces soles or with spiked or high heels should be avoided.

Walking Practices

The proper walking behaviors should be followed to reduce the risk of slip, trip or fall occurrence.

- “Walk Like a Penguin” when in icy and snow conditions.
- Maintain three points of contact when climbing or descending stairs or ladders, or when mounting or dismounting equipment.
- Use hand rails Railings when on stairs or ramps.
- Scan the walking surface ahead of you to look for slip, trip or fall hazards.

- Walk carefully and slowly when transitioning from one type of walking surface to another.
- Take extra care when coming indoors with wet shoes or boots.
- Use the walk off mats to dry shoes or boots when coming inside.
- Be aware of areas that may be slippery or wet and take extra caution.
 - Entrances during wet, snowy or icy conditions.
 - Areas near sinks
 - Kitchens
 - Cafeterias and break areas
 - Other areas where wet, or grease buildup may be expected
 - Be certain to use “Wet Floor” signs as necessary.
- Take short, slow steps.
- Do not carry loads that you cannot see over or around.
- If you are going to another floor, take the elevator if carrying a load that requires both hands.
- Use footwear that is appropriate for the conditions and follow the other guidelines in the Proper Footwear section of this plan.
- Report any missing or broken stair rails and slipper or damaged flooring, or loose or deteriorated carpeting.

Accident Investigation

All slips, trips, and falls will be investigated with the purpose of developing corrective actions that will prevent or significantly reduce the opportunities for future incidents from occurring. The Safety Administrator should be contacted as needed with the accident investigation process.

The Workers’ Compensation forms must be completed.

These forms include the [Supervisor Injury/Illness Investigation Form](#) that should be used for the investigation and corrective action

Behavioral Contributing Factors

- During the investigation, the “Prevent Slips, Trips & Falls — A tool to help identify human factors contributing to falls” (PDF) document should be used to help determine if any of the most common behavioral slip, trip, and contributing factors (rushing, frustration, fatigue, and complacency) played a part in the accident.
- If one or more of the most common behavioral contributing factors did play a part, the person who experienced the slip, trip and/or fall should be given the relevant information sheet on rushing, frustration, fatigue, or complacency/Autopilot.

Environmental Contributing Factors

- Environmental factors that contribute to slips, trips and falls should be corrected immediately.
- Examples of common environmental factors that contribute to slips, trips and falls are: ice or snow buildup, uneven flooring, potholes or depressions in parking lots, uneven sidewalks, wet floors, slippery

floors, poor lighting, and carpets with humps or turned-up edges. Please review the Slips, Trips, Falls — Environmental Factors document for a more complete list.

Inspections

Walking surfaces should be inspected regularly.

- Indoor walking surfaces should be inspected monthly. The Indoor Walking Surfaces Inspection Form (PDF) should be used to assistance with the inspections.
- Outdoor walking surfaces should be inspected monthly. The Outdoor Walking Surfaces Inspection Form (PDF) should be used to assistance with the inspections.

If you have questions about this plan, contact [Sandeia O'Bryant](#), DHS Safety Administrator.