

School Safety -

Slips, Trips, and Falls



Slips, trips and falls are among the leading cause of workplace injuries in schools. Two of the most common causes of slips, trips and falls are slippery walking surfaces and uneven walking surfaces. You can prevent slips, trips and falls by following some basic safety measures.

Prevention Requires Teamwork

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Stay alert and be attentive to what you are doing and where you are going. Exercise care and practice safety awareness in everything you do.

School administration and employees have a shared duty in the recognition, avoidance and control of hazards to prevent slips, trips and falls. Employees should clean up spills and maintain good housekeeping in their areas of responsibility. Employees should report hazards to the appropriate personnel.

Teachers

- ✓ When working beyond your reach, use either a stepladder or request assistance. Do not stand on a chair or desk to reach above your head!
- ✓ Minimize your chance of slip, trip and fall hazards by wearing appropriate footwear. High heels should not be worn outdoors during winter; slip resistant soles or boots are best. Consider using a shoe bag to change out footwear.
- ✓ Obey caution signs during floor maintenance or construction projects.
- ✓ Watch where you're going and look for elevation changes and signs of flooring change.
- ✓ Use the handrail when on steps.

Food Service Personnel

- ✓ Choose footwear according to floor surface; wear slip resistant footwear in the kitchen area.
- ✓ Maintain clean and dry floors; clean up spills immediately.
- ✓ Floor mats should be used in areas where appropriate, i.e. dishwashing areas.
- ✓ Practice good housekeeping.

Check out our [Safety Tips page](#) for more safety information.

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Custodians

- ✓ Consider tasks, i.e. stripping or waxing floors or working outside in ice and snow conditions that may require special attention to slip-resistant floor surfaces or carefully selected shoe sole material and treads.
- ✓ Instead of trying to shovel and salt all of the entrances, consider closing a couple of entrances during the winter. Ask employees to enter and exit from one or two doors; thereby, making it easier to ensure snow is removed, ice doesn't build up and conditions are less hazardous.
- ✓ Observe employees' walking patterns. Consider making walking paths that are highlighted with yard flags or lights.
- ✓ Mark trouble spots with caution tape to ensure the path is properly cared for and employees are using a safe walkway through snow banks and over slippery curbs.
- ✓ Caution signs should be used when cleaning, stripping or waxing floors.
- ✓ Floor mats should be positioned correctly and in good condition.
- ✓ Routinely inspect walking surfaces and generate work orders for repairs.
- ✓ Place caution signs nearby to warn of the danger until the necessary repairs can be completed.
- ✓ When working beyond your reach, use the proper ladder for the job. Do not stand on a chair, bucket, etc. to extend your reach.
- ✓ Clean up spills immediately or use caution signs when spills cannot be immediately cleaned up.

Maintenance Personnel

- ✓ Routinely inspect walking surfaces and generate work orders for repairs.
- ✓ Maintain exterior walking surfaces in good condition, i.e. repair cracked sidewalks, deteriorated steps and curbs, loose or missing handrails, holes in the parking area, etc. or mark with caution signs or barricades until the necessary repairs can be completed.
- ✓ Maintain handrails, guardrails, footboards and seat boards on all bleachers.
- ✓ Consider slip resistant footwear when working ice and snow conditions.
- ✓ When working beyond your reach, use the proper ladder for the job. Do not stand on a chair, bucket, etc. to extend your reach.
- ✓ Follow OSHA fall protection guidelines when applicable.

Bus Drivers

- ✓ Minimize your chance of slip, trip and fall hazards by wearing the appropriate footwear; wear slip resistant footwear during ice and snow conditions.
- ✓ Keep the bus steps free of ice and snow accumulations.
- ✓ Use caution in the bus garage and parking areas during ice and snow conditions.
- ✓ Maintain the bus handrail in good condition.
- ✓ Use a stepladder or obtain assistance when making adjustments to side view mirrors.

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