

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls result from the unintended or unexpected change in the contact between the feet or footwear and the walking or working surface. Walking and working surfaces such as floors, stairs, ramps, walkways, and roadways are associated with 'same-level' slip, trip, and fall injuries.

Purpose:

In accordance with the University's objective to provide a safe and healthy working environment, the purpose of this guideline is to provide information for the prevention of injuries caused by slips, trips, and falls.

Scope:

This guideline applies to all Carleton University employees.

The Facts:

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, (WSIB) provide the following statistics regarding slips, trips, and falls in Ontario workplaces:

- Slips, trips, and falls cause 20% of all workplace injuries.
- Slips, trips, and falls cause over 18,000 injuries per year.
- Same-level slips and trips account for 65% of all fall-related injuries.
- About 20 people die each year due to falls.

Why are workers falling?

Workers are falling due to slip, trip, and fall hazards associated with the following:

Housekeeping and Maintenance Practices

- Accumulation of clutter and waste.
- Improper storage of material and equipment.
- Spills.
- Extension cords, conduits, cables, and hoses across walking surfaces.
- Loose and unsecured floor mats, carpets, and coverings.
- Damaged or missing flooring materials.
- Stairs and ramps with loose or missing handrails.
- Inadequate lighting.

Walking and Working Surface Conditions

- Slippery, wet or icy walking surfaces.
- Uneven walking surfaces.
- Surface changes such as carpet to tile or level to sloped.
- Surface protrusions or depressions such as thresholds, cover plates, and gratings.

Work Practices

- Wearing inappropriate footwear for the task.
- Carrying items that obstruct view.
- Rushing to complete work.

Personal Behavior

- Wearing improperly fitted, loose, or undone footwear.
- Cutting through areas not designated or intended as walkways.
- Horseplay and running in the workplace.
- Not paying attention.

How can slips, trips, and falls be prevented?

Slips, trips, and falls in the workplace can be prevented using a systematic and comprehensive approach.

Supervisors must:

- Be aware of slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- Conduct detailed inspections of the work area on a regular basis.
- Investigate all slip, trip, and fall hazard reports.
- Investigate all incident reports involving falls.
- Provide training.

Workers must:

- Be aware of slip, trip, and fall hazards.
- Report slip, trip, and fall hazards to their supervisor.
- Report all incidents of falls to their supervisor even if no injury occurs.
- Avoid work practices and personal behaviors that may cause slips, trips, and falls.
- Attend training.

For additional information regarding this guideline please contact the Manager, Environmental Health and Safety at extension 3809.