

Propel HR NEWSLETTER

SAFETY

December 2001

SLIPS, TRIPS, and FALLS

There are an estimated 300,000 disabling injuries each year in the American work force, resulting in 1,400 worker deaths. These slips, trips, and falls account for 15 to 20 percent of all workers' compensation costs.

Proper flooring – wisely chosen and properly cared for – is an important safeguard against serious and costly mishaps. Slips often occur where there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface. Most of these accidents can be easily prevented.

Many things can cause serious falls including: Unsafe ladders or stairs, obstructions in walkways, improper shoes, slippery surfaces, and poor lighting.

STAIRS

Many falls occur on stairs from:

- Slippery, worn, or broken steps
- Loose or nonexistent railings
- Steep steps or ones that are not steep enough
- Inadequate lighting

Safety on Stairs

- ❖ Always use a railing
- ❖ Never run up or down the stairs
- ❖ Keep one hand free for support or to break a fall
- ❖ Don't carry anything that blocks your vision

SOLID GROUND

Falls often happen on solid ground from:

- Not watching where you are going
- Stumbling over loose pant cuffs or high-heeled shoes
- Sitting improperly in a chair-not keeping all four legs on the floor
- Slipping on ice or wet surfaces
- Running

6 Quick Tips to Prevent a Slip

1. Clean up spills, drips and leaks immediately.
2. Avoid turning sharply when you walk on a slippery surface.
3. Always watch where you are going.
4. Walk cautiously on wet floors.
5. Report all hazards to your supervisor.
6. Post signs or barriers to warn others of hazards.

DOs and DON'Ts To Climb Safely

CHECKLIST (Help Keep Paths Clear)

- ✓ Put all materials and tools away after use.
- ✓ Close all drawers and cabinets when not in use.
- ✓ Keeps cords and power cables out of walkways.
- ✓ Step over or around obstructions, not on them.
- ✓ Clear stairways – never leave objects lying on stairs.
- ✓ Make sure that your path is well lit. If it is not, use a flashlight.
- ✓ Walk carefully, especially when carrying items.

DO:

- Wear stable, secure shoes.
- Set the ladder on firm, stable ground; one foot away for every 4 feet of ladder height.
- Use the correct height ladder for the job.
- Hold ladder with one hand while working.
- Hold ladder with both hands while climbing.
- Face the ladder when climbing up and down.
- Center your weight between the rails.
- If you are using a folding ladder, be sure it is completely unfolded before climbing on it.

DON'T:

- **Don't** carry objects while climbing - use a special belt or hoist materials up with a rope.
- **Don't** step on the top rungs of any ladder.
- **Don't** allow more than one person on a ladder at the same time.
- **Don't** lean too far off the side of a ladder; overreaching is the greatest danger!
- **Don't** use aluminum ladders when doing electrical work.

Using good housekeeping and commonsense practices can reduce slips, trips, and falls in the workplace. These accidents can be easily avoided by remaining attentive to your surroundings. Good housekeeping is everyone's responsibility.

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN!

Sometimes, no matter how hard you try to prevent accidents, they happen. If an accident occurs, remember:

1. Send the injured employee to the nearest clinic or doctor's office.
2. Call Propel HRplus to notify us of the accident.
3. Complete an accident investigation report.
4. Fax the report to **Propel HR** at (864) 232-0178.

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or would like additional information or safety videos, please call **Propel HR** at (864) 271-7611 or (800) 446-6567.