

Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls can occur in everyone's daily life, whether during or outside of work. What most people do not realize is that serious injuries and even fatalities can result from slips, trips and falls. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) have all cited slips, trips and falls as a leading source of occupational injuries and fatalities.

Workers operate in a variety of environments in which they are exposed to hazards associated with slips, trips and falls. Work sites can be wet and muddy, icy, steeply graded, above or below ground level or all of the above and more! The following information may help workers avoid or prevent a slip, trip or fall from occurring while working in the field.

Slip Prevention

- Be aware that the work site may cause situations in which you could slip and fall.
- Check the jobsite for areas where slips may occur. Look for mud, loose gravel, wet surfaces or ice.
- Being able to avoid slippery areas is not always possible, such as when the whole jobsite is covered with mud. If unavoidable situations are present, make sure everyone is aware of the hazard and take extra precautions.
- When possible, remove ice, snow or water from the work area.
- Avoid walking and carrying equipment and supplies through areas where slip hazards are present.
- Insure that you have work boots with appropriate support and soles for the conditions.
- Keep all work platforms clear and clean of materials that create a slip hazard.

Trip Prevention

- Check for and remove items such as branches, sticks, tools, hoses, cords and any other items that may cause a trip.
- If a trip hazard, such as a very large boulder or piece of concrete cannot be removed, avoid continually walking and carrying items around it and inform others of the hazard.
- Keep work materials organized or off of the ground.
- Check and clear any routes you intend to use while carrying items before you begin your work and throughout the workday as necessary.

Fall Prevention

- Take particular care when climbing up ladders or stairs or when moving to and from work platforms
- Never jump on or off equipment or platforms of any kind. Plan your moves.
- Use fall protection, applicable PPE and guarding at all times.

Common sense, right? Wrong. Slips, trips and falls account for up to 18% of all workplace injuries and almost 10% of workplace deaths. Take the time to avoid situations where you could slip, trip or fall.

Slips, Trips and Falls Quiz

The following statements should be answered with "True" or "False." Answers below.

1. Slip, trip and fall hazards can be avoided 100% of the time.
2. Ice, snow and water are some of the slip hazards common at work sites.
3. Only MSHA has recognized slips, trips and falls as the leading cause of occupational injuries and fatalities.
4. If a trip hazard cannot be removed, it should be avoided.
5. It can be safe to jump off equipment or platforms.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Answers:

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. False