



for custodians

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PREVENTION OF SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS FOR CUSTODIAL STAFF

Two of the more common hazards for custodians is slipping on wet or waxed floors or tripping over an object. A slip or a trip may result in a fall. Common employee injuries resulting from slips, trips and falls include head and back injuries, cuts, fractures, pulled muscles and deep contusions.

Slips happen where there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the floor. Common causes of slips are:

- Wet, waxed, or oily surfaces
- Occasional spills
- Weather hazards (ice, rain, or snow)
- Loose, unanchored rugs or mats
- Improper footwear (high heels, shoes with slick soles)
- Floors or other surfaces that do not have some degree of traction in all areas

Trips happen when your foot strikes or hits an object, causing you to lose your balance and eventually fall. Common causes of tripping are:

- Obstructed view
- Poor lighting
- Clutter
- Wrinkled carpeting
- Cables or cords left in the open
- Bottom drawers left open
- Uneven (steps, thresholds) surface

Good housekeeping, improvements to flooring, proper footwear, appropriate pace of walking, and proper visibility are critical for preventing fall accidents.

By using the following work practices, you can help prevent slips, trips and falls.

- Sweep up any loose debris from floors.
- Prevent spills by covering all liquids. If a container cannot be covered, don't fill it to the top.
- Select a floor cleaner/wax that enhances slip resistance and does not leave a slippery residue
- Clean up spilled liquids or tracked-in water immediately.
- Mark spills, wet or waxed areas and any hazards in walkways with warning signs, safety cones or barricade tape.
- Wear proper footwear (flat, rubber-soled shoes with wide tread design).
- Take time and pay attention to where you are going. Adjust your stride to a pace suitable for the walking surface. Keep firm footing at all times.
- Make sure your path is clear and stick to cleared areas instead of taking short cuts.
- Wipe feet on entrance mats when raining, snowy, icy or muddy outside.
- Properly store tools or cords that aren't in use instead of leaving them in someone's path.
- Securely attach rugs and runners to the floor.
- Cover cords and cables that cross walkways.
- Turn on lights before entering an area. If entering a dark area with no lights, use a flashlight and walk slowly.
- Replace burned-out bulbs and repair faulty switches.
- When you push, pull or carry loads, make sure that the load does not block your vision.
- Use handrails, particularly on steps and ramps.

These simple steps will contribute to the overall safety of staff and lessen the possibility of slips, trips and falls. To learn more about preventing slips, trips and falls check out your district's SafeSchools.com on-line training website.