

Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

It can happen to any of us...that momentary lapse of inattention. We may be thinking about a work task that needs to be completed, something going on at home or being distracted by a co-worker that ends in a slip, trip or fall.

- Tripping over an air hose or part you have left on the floor
- Slipping on an oil spill that was not cleaned up
- A stumble down a stairway
- A trip over an uneven surface
- Slipping on the ice

Slipping, tripping or falling can lead to a variety of regrettable events ranging from a simple bruised shin to an extremely serious injury and even death.

Slips occur when there is too little friction or traction between your feet and the walking surface. The most common causes of slips are wet surfaces, ice or other weather hazards, spills and poor tread on footwear.

Prevention measures include:

- Wet surfaces: shorten your stride and walk with your feet pointed out or in slightly and make wider turns.
- Spills: clean up immediately
- Weather hazards: walk more slowly so you can react to traction changes. Wear slip resistant shoes or boots and dry off shoes as soon as practical after entering a building.
- Poor tread on footwear/poor traction: Wear slip resistant footwear, apply abrasive strips or paint to smooth walking surfaces, post warning signs.
- Ensure efficient drainage from vehicle detail operations.

Trips typically occur when your foot strikes an object and; your momentum takes you off balance.

Prevention measures include:

- Keep hoses, cords and other trip hazards off the floor when not in use.
- Remove items that are no longer needed from your work space.
- Clean up oil and water spills immediately.
- Clean floor on a daily basis to remove residual oils, etc.
- Ensure your walking path is clear.
- Repair damaged grates or drain covers.

Falls usually take place from one level to another

Prevention measures include:

- Don't stand on vehicle running boards or tires and bumpers to perform service work.
- Don't stand on cans/crates or homemade items to work on vehicles. Be sure to use a sturdy step with rubber feet to prevent kick out.
- Walk up and down stairs using handrail. Never jump several stairs at a time.
- Avoid carrying awkward or heavy packages up and down stairs.
- Ensure lighting is good in stairways.
- Don't jump from beds of trucks or alignment machines.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - *The information and suggestions presented by PMA Companies in this risk control document are for your consideration in your loss prevention efforts. They are not intended to be complete or definitive in identifying all hazards associated with your business, preventing workplace accidents, or complying with any safety related or other laws or regulations. You are encouraged to alter the information and suggestions to fit the specific hazards of your business and to have your legal counsel review all of your plans and company policies.*

