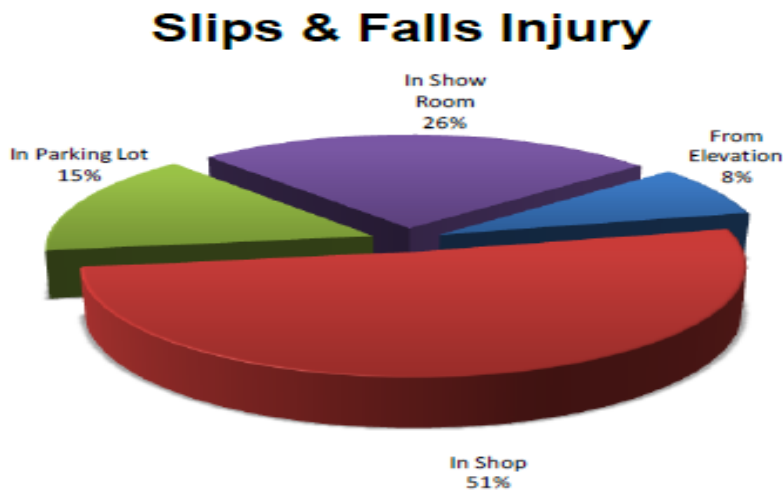


Common Shop Slip/Trip/Fall Hazards

Slips, trips, and falls are a major source of “on-the-job” injuries. In fact, the average cost per claim for fall related injuries is higher than any other type of injury. Many of these injuries are serious, including broken bones, twisted ankles, muscle strains, cuts and head injuries. The long-term medical costs, lost wages, lost production, and worker replacement expenses associated with slip/trip/falls can easily put a dent in your profits.

In 2015, Virginia Dealerships slip/trip and fall incidents occurred in the following areas. These incidents are the 2nd leading cost by cause.



Common causes of slips / trips and falls within the Service Shops, Body Shops, Detail and Parts

- Cords lying in aisles or other walking areas.
- Water, grease or lubricants on the floor creating a slip hazard.
- Items (pallets, boxes, supplies, tools, etc.) stored in a walking area.
- Material stored on stairs.
- Poor lighting in walking or working areas.
- Uneven or damaged walking surfaces

Cords and Hoses

A common trip hazard in all dealerships is cords and hoses. Cords and hoses should not be left on floors or lying in walking areas.

What hoses and cords are the most problematic?

Air Hoses- Air hoses are a common problem in dealerships. Since hoses are used by technicians throughout the day, they are often left on the floor. As a result of leaving the hoses on the floor, they become a significant threat for trip/fall injuries. Appropriate solutions to control this hazard are as follows: retractable hose reels, and a new product “coiled air lines”.



A less effective solution is to keep the hoses on hangers (either attached to the lift post, or on a side wall). This option is not as effective because the hoses do not usually get returned to their hangers. Take a look in your shop. Do you see hoses lying around?

Extension cords- Extension cords can only be used on a temporary basis; ‘temporary’ means using the cord when you need additional power for a short period of time, such as when operating a power tool. They cannot be used as a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords that are wrapped around poles, taped down to the floor or look like they have been in the same place for years are not likely being used on a temporary basis, but rather, they are being used as a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords create trip and electrical hazards. Look in your work area and see where extension cords are in use and take action to eliminate as many as possible.

Floor Surface Conditions

Is your service department floor clean? Think again- many dealerships think that standard mopping of service floors will keep the floors clean. Actually, that’s far from the truth. These days, many dealerships have painted, non-slip floor surfaces in their service departments. These floor types require different types of floor cleaning. The traditional mopping just won’t do the trick.

These newer floor surfaces are designed to give technicians better traction through its raised paint, grit or grooved floor etching. Traditional mopping just moves soiled solution around the floor, allowing the soiled solution to settle in the floor grooves that are designed to improve traction. Instead, you end up with floor build-up and slick floors. To improve floor surface conditions, it is suggested that dealerships invest in a floor scrubbing machine. These walk-behind floor scrubbers are designed to apply fresh cleaning solution to the floors, scrub them and vacuum up the soiled solution, rather than allowing the soiled solution to dry on the floor. Always follow your floor manufacturer’s instructions for appropriate cleaning solutions, and use of a floor scrubber should effectively maintain floor cleanliness and traction.

Material Storage in Working Areas

Take a hard look at your dealership. Are the different departments well organized? Or are the workstations tight and cluttered with boxes or miscellaneous parts, etc? When was the last time your dealership had a good “old fashioned” spring cleaning? It’s not surprising to see storage of old parts and equipment build-up over time, and years later you notice that the shop is in shambles from “too much stuff”. It’s often a problem in Parts Departments and Body Shops as well. Storage of old parts, or warranty items that “never go away”, seem to build up on part’s department shelves, until you are in overflow mode, which causes storage in aisles and stairways. These types of storage situations can easily produce an unnecessary trip/falls. Sometime soon, take a walk-through of your departments - arrange a “spring cleaning”!

Keeping Your Area Free From Hazards

Some of the biggest slip, trip, and fall problems found in dealerships are poor housekeeping issues. As you look at your work area, keep these issues in mind:

- Make sure floors are swept so that dust and debris do not accumulate and create a trip or slip hazard
- Keep floors clean and dry – wet floors are a slip hazard. Clean up spilled materials immediately. Set out caution signs to warn of wet floor conditions
- Don’t let trash overflow in work areas
- Remove excess clutter from aisles, exits and passageways
- Stairs should never have material stored on them
- Minimize cord use. Avoid running cords down hallways or across aisles. Use retractable hose reels or re-coilable air hoses
- Wear non-slip footwear to prevent falls on slippery surfaces

Walking and working surfaces can cause many different injuries. The more we pay attention to the hazards in our work area, the better chance we have of controlling workplace injuries and lost production time.

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.*

