

Safety Talk



Walking is Working: Avoiding Slips, Trips, and Falls

While each of us have different jobs, for most of us, walking is part of our workday. Whether it's walking the factory floor, taking a stroll outside during a break or getting from one meeting to another, we are on our feet for at least part of the day. With all of that foot traffic, there is always the potential for a fall.

According to Injury Facts®, same-level falls are a leading cause of preventable workplace injuries causing time away from work. While walking seems like a simple task, it's been a leading cause of workplace injury for many years. We need to watch out for all of the hazards tied to walking just as we would any other part of our jobs that poses a safety risk.

So what are some of the dangers tied to walking? They include distraction, footwear, poor walking surfaces, damaged surfaces and basic housekeeping.

DISTRACTED WALKING

Cell phones and other portable electronics can distract us not only while driving but also while walking. Many of us have probably come across viral videos of people bumping into walls, falling into fountains, or tripping over obstacles while using phones, and wondered how such incidents could occur. Distraction can manifest in various ways, such as:

- Reading text, memos, or any written material while walking. If you must read on the move, step aside with your back against a wall before continuing.
- Engaging in intense conversations, whether on the phone or with someone nearby. Even wearing headphones can be a distraction. Stay alert, watch your surroundings, and be aware of changes in elevation, floor cracks, and other potential hazards.

- Avoid rushing too quickly, especially in busy areas and when turning corners. Take it slow and be prepared for others who may cross your path.
- Refrain from carrying too many items in your hands. Keep your view clear and your hands free to support yourself in case of a slip or fall. Remember to always use the handrail when on stairs.

DRESS FOR YOUR DAY

When selecting the right footwear to prevent falls, your decision may vary based on several factors:

- Where are you headed? Prioritize safety by choosing appropriate footwear for your work setting, such as steel-toed boots or slip-resistant shoes. If your surroundings change often, plan ahead to ensure you have the right footwear for each environment, whether indoors or outdoors.
- What is the weather like? Opt for boots on snowy or rainy days to navigate safely from the parking lot to indoors. Consider bringing an extra pair of shoes for indoor wear if needed. For outdoor work, ensure your footwear is durable enough to withstand various terrains and environments.

It is important to be ready to swiftly evacuate a work area in case of an emergency and your footwear can affect how quickly that can be done.



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KEEP YOUR SPACE TIDY

Sometimes, a bit of tidying up can go a long way in preventing falls:

- Keep papers and boxes off the floor and away from walkways.
- Ensure drawers are consistently closed to avoid collisions.
- Cover cords properly and keep them out of walkways.
- Maintain adequate lighting; replace any burnt-out bulbs promptly.
- Clean up spills right away.
- Use a ladder or step stool instead of standing on a chair to reach high places.
- Address any damaged floor surfaces or carpets promptly.

FALL-PROOF YOUR HOME

When it comes to falls, your decisions matter, whether at work or home. As a pedestrian, be extra cautious on sidewalks and in crowded public spaces – never presume others are looking out for you. Assist older adults in making their homes, particularly their bathrooms, fall-proof to minimize the risk of injury. By taking these steps, we can lower the chances of falls in any setting. It's a responsibility we all share.



Safety Engagement



K D D D H M H K J R A U U W T
I U J R R F W F A M O X G A S
N O C B T H S E G H Q N U L S
D O V L J L W B M C Y O L K Z
T L I G H T I N G T U I Z W J
H N F T O O E C N L P T Q A Y
L H E O C G L G Y S R A I Y T
R B F R T U W R A K E V A S A
Z A W W T A R O R D D E R O A
N O I T C A R T S I D L I L M
X A E L S Y B E S R A E C Q S
M R K Q I M R L V B L T J D U
B A R B X N A S D R O C H J C
S T S Q R S G U U G B P X N M
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CORDS

CLUTTER

DISTRACTION

ELEVATION

FOOTWEAR

LADDER

LIGHTING

OBSTRUCTION

RAILINGS

SPILLS

WALKWAYS

