

Focus on Safety

Safety Tips from Wausau Insurance Companies

Caution: Slippery When Wet

In most industries, slips and falls are a major cause of accidents. According to the 2005 Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index, falls on the same level are the No. 2 cause of employee injuries, second only to material handling, and account for 13.7 percent of all workers compensation claims reviewed.

In addition, slips and falls on a level surface represent a liability concern in areas with high traffic from customers, vendors or tour groups.

Restaurants, hotels and municipalities are at the greatest risk of slip-and-fall injuries to customers and visitors.

Preventing slips and falls requires participation by all employees.

SLIP-AND-FALL CAUSES:

- Dirt, grease, ice or condensation buildup
- Damaged curbs, cluttered walkways and uneven surfaces
- Poor lighting, lack of handrails and lack of warnings
- Weather changes—rain, snow and hail
- Parking lots—cracks, potholes or depressions

TO PREVENT SLIPS AND FALLS:

- Report root causes of slips and falls, such as a leak in the roof or damaged equipment
- Secure an area after a material or liquid spill using bilingual signs or barriers
- Follow a clean-as-you-go policy and sweep floors during downtime
- Post bilingual warning signs if the cleanup leaves the floor damp
- Do not allow clutter to build up in the work area, especially in walkways
- Always turn on the lights prior to entering a dark room
- Actively look for spills, wet areas or clutter in the work area
- Report any accident to the supervisor immediately
- Lay mats flat on the floor to reduce trips and falls

If you experience inclement weather during winter months, focus additional maintenance on entryways and outdoor exposures. Identify and correct any slip-and-fall exposure before it causes an accident.

MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST:

PREVENTING SLIPS AND FALLS

- Repair any equipment that could cause a slip or fall hazard
- Provide slip-resistant mats with flat edges in entryways and transition areas
- Provide enough mats for adverse conditions
- Highlight transitions in ground height, with yellow paint
- Consider applications or treatments to improve slip resistance of surfaces
- Periodically inspect the inside and outside of the facility to identify slip-and-fall hazards
- Maintain a control log to record the inspection
- Provide adequate cleaning supplies and train employees on cleaning procedures
- Evaluate the effectiveness of floor cleaning, especially in high-traffic areas
- Ensure snow and ice removal using salt or sand when necessary
- Encourage employees to wear slip-resistant shoes



Make sure employees complete a snow and ice inspection log to document outdoor maintenance.

For a copy of a log, please call Wausau's Loss Prevention Consulting Center at 800-619-4545.

Taking an active role is the key to preventing slip-and-fall injuries to employees, visitors and customers.

Receive this publication electronically to post on your intranet, print your own copies or e-mail to other employees. Call 1-800-845-4075 ext. 7816.



Bottom line, a better value.SM

COMMERCIAL AUTO GENERAL LIABILITY PROPERTY UMBRELLA WORKERS COMPENSATION

©2007 Employers Insurance Company of Wausau. All rights reserved. Wausau Insurance Companies specifically disclaims all liability for damages or personal injury alleged to arise from reliance on the information contained in this document. 02-07