

November 2016

# ShopTalk

## Slips, Trips and Falls



**What will we do today to prevent an incident?**

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Every year, hundreds of workers are injured from slips, trips and falls. These can result in injuries that range from minor cuts and bruises to more severe injuries, which may result in hospitalization and long recovery times. Slips, trips and falls are common because these hazards can be found in many areas of the workplace.

### What's the hazard?

When it comes to slips, trips and falls, the hazards can include:

Wet or oily surfaces; occasional spills; weather hazards like snow, rain, or ice; loose or wrinkled mats; uneven floors or surfaces such as steps or thresholds; surfaces with different degrees of traction like gravel/pavement; obstructed views; poor lighting; clutter and obstructions (housekeeping); uneven ground.

### What can happen?

David works the early morning shift at a manufacturing plant. The employer operates 24 hours a day. Overnight, several inches of fresh snow fell. The night crew was leaving as David was walking up the sidewalk to enter the building. A couple of feet before the entrance, he slipped on the fresh snow and fell onto his back and hit his head causing bruising to his back and a concussion to his head.

**Based on the scenario above, here are some questions that could be used to spark discussion:**

1. How could this have been avoided?
2. What steps could the employer have put in place to reduce the risk of the slippery surface given the recent snowfall?

### What precautions can be taken to prevent slips, trips and falls in the workplace?

**To help protect yourself and others from slips, trips or falls, the following should be considered:**

- Barricade wet or uneven areas
- Clean up spills immediately
- Remove obstacles from walkways and keep them free of clutter
- Cover cables on walking surfaces (tape them down if necessary)
- Ensure walkways are well-lit by replacing bulbs and faulty switches
- Secure loose mats, rugs, cables and cords
- Close low filing cabinet or storage drawers
- Highlight the edges of uneven surfaces/stairs
- Inspect outdoor surfaces regularly for snow or ice buildup, and use appropriate ice clearing practices
- Wear appropriate footwear for the job
- Don't carry more than you can safely handle, and ensure you can see where you are going when carrying large items.

### Other resources:

Some additional Safe Work Manitoba resources on Slips, Trips and Falls include **Bulletin 294 Slips, Trips and Falls**, our **Slips, Trips and Falls Safety Sticker** and **Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls video**.

### Share your ideas!

If you have an idea for Shop Talk that you think others would benefit from, we'd like to hear about it. Email us: [information@safeworkmanitoba.ca](mailto:information@safeworkmanitoba.ca).

### For more information:

Visit [safemanitoba.com](http://safemanitoba.com) or call **204-957-SAFE (7233)** or toll-free **1-855-957-SAFE (7233)**.