

LOOK OUT: SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Did you know that slips, trips and falls make up the majority of general industry accidents? According to the U.S. Department of Labor, more than 12,000 people die in the U.S. annually because of these injuries; and according to the National Safety Council, these injuries account for approximately \$70 billion a year in workers' compensation and associated medical costs.

It's important to understand the definitions of slips, trips and falls – and ways to prevent them from occurring at the workplace.

WHAT IS A SLIP?

A slip occurs when there is too little friction between a person's feet or shoes and the walking surface. Slips frequently occur due to spills, wet floors, unsuitable footwear, loose rugs or mats, or inclement weather.

WHAT IS A TRIP?

A trip occurs when a person's foot makes contact with an object, such as damaged stairs, carpets, holes, rugs or mats, and the person is thrown off balance.

WHAT IS A FALL?

Falls – usually categorized as same-level or elevated – are caused by many factors and can, at the very least, lead to injury.

COMMON INJURIES

Did you know most frequently workers injure their backs as a result of a slip, trip or fall? Other areas most susceptible to injury include wrists, shoulders, knees, elbows, ankles and hips. These injuries can range in severity from strains, sprains and fractures to death.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Preventive workplace safety measures can reduce the frequency and severity of slips, trips and falls from occurring. Examples of safety measures include:

- Maintain floors with good housekeeping practices
- Utilize slip-resistant shoes
- Pay attention when walking
- Take time to reach your destination
- Remove obstacles
- Clean up spills in your work area
- Provide sufficient lighting in your work area
- If you cannot fix the issue, report it and warn others

HELP REDUCE YOUR RISK OF INJURY

It is the responsibility of employers and employees to maintain a risk-free workplace to prevent slips, trips and falls. Employers must comply with workplace safety measures; however, it is also the responsibility of employees to learn the proper procedures and participate in the necessary training to help provide for a safer working environment.

Encova Insurance assists policyholders with information and education about workplace safety. Our team of professionals can help you and your employees recognize the major causes of slips, trips and falls in a variety of industries, as well as offer strategies that can be implemented to keep workplaces safer. For more information, visit encova.com.