

City Safe

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Number 4

**A Guide To Assist In
Training Employees About:**

Slips, Trips, and Falls

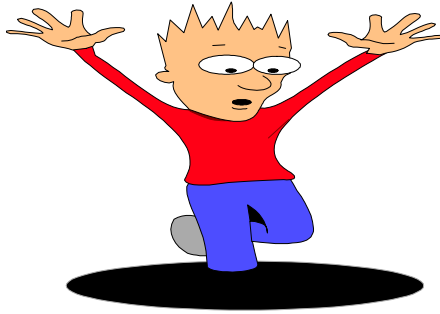


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Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust

Slips, Trips, & Falls



Meeting Objective:

To emphasize the types of injuries associated with slips, trips, and falls.

Introduction:

Slips, trips, and falls are common occurrences in many work places. While some of these accidents are unforeseeable, many of them occur as a result of carelessness, disorderly work areas, and lack of attention to detail. It is important to pay close attention to this issue because falls kill over 12,000 people a year, about 1,200 of them at work. This makes them the biggest cause of accidental death after traffic accidents. Additionally, 33,000 people are disabled every year from falling on stairs.

This issue of City Safe will focus on simple techniques, that when implemented, significantly reduce the safety hazards to employees. By reducing safety hazards, cities are able to reduce their workers' compensation expenses and insure long, healthy relationships with good workers.

General Hazards

- Unsafe stairs
- Obstructions in walkways or on stairs
- Slippery or uneven surfaces
- Improper shoes
- Moving too fast
- Poor lighting
- Being tired or distracted
- Loose railings

Safety Procedures

There are a number of safety procedures you should follow to prevent these accidents. None of them are very complicated and it shouldn't take very long before they become habits.

- Keep everything in its proper place and put things away after use.
- Repair or report any floor problems: loose or missing tiles, warped wood planks, turned-up rug edges.
- Keep walkways and aisles clear of obstacles.
- Keep drawers closed.
- Dispose of trash promptly and properly.
- Don't leave machines, tools, or other materials on the floor.
- Block off and mark areas that are being cleaned or repaired.
- Keep cords, power cables, and air hoses out of walkways.
- Clean up spills and leaks right away.
- Be sure there's enough lighting before you move ahead. If need be, use a flashlight.

The way you move, and even dress, can make the difference between getting where you're going and having an accident. Keep these tips in mind:

- Walk, don't run.
- Walk slowly, with a sliding motion, on slippery or uneven surfaces.
- Wear shoes with nonskid soles and flat heels.
- Beware of loose pant cuffs; you could trip over them.
- Don't carry a load you can't see over—especially on stairs.
- Keep your hands at your sides, not in your pockets, for balance.
- Use railings when climbing up or down stairs.
- When you sit in a chair, keep all four chair legs on the floor.
- Don't jump off platforms or loading docks.
- Step around obstructions.
- Don't fool around and engage in horseplay.
- Pay attention to where you're going and what might be in your way.



The last point is really the most important. If you look where you're going, you're more likely to get there in one piece. One more thing: Sometimes, even when you're careful, you can fall. But you can still try to keep from being injured seriously by "falling correctly." There are two ways to do it: One way is to roll with the fall. The other is to bend your elbows and knees so your legs and arms absorb the fall. If you do fall, it's a good idea to get medical attention. You can't always tell if something has been torn, sprained, or broken.

Wrap Up

Slips, trips, and falls are among the most common kinds of accidents. Even worse, they're among the most common kinds of accidents causing death or disability. So keep the work area clear—especially aisles, walkways, and stairs. Make sure that stairs, ladders, and guardrails are in good condition. Wear sensible shoes with nonskid soles and flat heels, and be especially careful around wet or slippery surfaces. And, most important, pay attention. Check the areas you're entering. Look for hazards. Keep your mind on what you're doing and where you're going. That's the best way to maintain your balance and your safety.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

1. What are some of the most common causes of slips, trips, and falls?
2. What types of things does OSHA regulate to try to prevent slips, trips, and falls?
3. What hazards can cause you to fall on stairs?
4. What's most likely to make you fall on level ground?
5. What kinds of situations can make floors dangerous?
6. What are some of the good housekeeping practices that can help prevent slips, trips, and falls?
7. What kind of shoes should you wear to prevent slipping?
8. What's the best overall rule to follow so you won't slip, trip, or fall?
9. How do you "fall correctly"?
10. Are there any other questions?

Resources:

>OSHA's website that focuses on Slips, Trips, and Falls
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/smallbusiness/sec15.html>

>National Safety Council
<http://www.nsc.org/mem/educ/slips.htm>

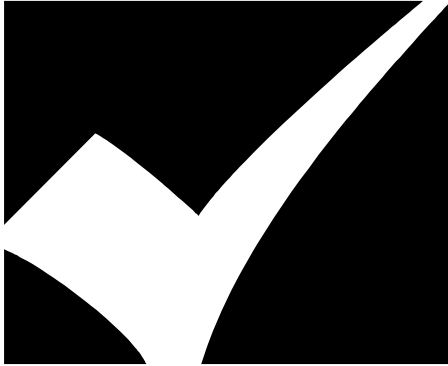
Quick Facts...

KMIT Facts about Slip and Fall Injuries:

Average Costs Per Incident:

- Fall from a different level, \$2,786.45
- From a ladder or scaffolding, \$4,115.42
- From liquid or grease spills, \$1,324.12
- On ice, \$1,654.66
- On same level, \$1,495.27

Just as there are safety exercises to guard against specific types of accidents, there are many general precautions that an organization can take to increase their overall safety. Please consider the following safety checklist.



Safety Meeting Checklist

Management:

- 1 . Do you have a safety meeting policy?
- 2 . Do you enforce it?
- 3 . Are supervisors kept up to date on new safety regulations?
- 4 . Do you inform supervisors about company accident and injury rates?

- 5 . Are supervisors trained to conduct safety meetings?
- 6 . Do you make suggestions to supervisors on safety meeting topics?
- 7 . Do you pay for safety meeting time?
- 8 . Do you review supervisors' safety meeting plans and schedules?
- 9 . Do you evaluate safety meeting success?
- 10 . Do you have a program to recognize safety improvements?
- 11 . Do you help supervisors plan safety meetings?
- 12 . Do you have training materials available for supervisors to use?
- 13 . Are supervisors informed about available training aids?
- 14 . Do you participate in conducting safety meetings?
- 15 . Do you sit in on some safety meetings as a participant?
- 16 . Do you help supervisors evaluate and improve safety meetings?

Supervisors:

- 1 . Do you hold safety meetings regularly?
- 2 . Do you keep track of new safety regulations and accident and injury statistics?
- 3 . Do you schedule and plan safety meetings in advance?
- 4 . Do you review your schedules and plans with management?
- 5 . Are safety professionals and other supervisors consulted in developing safety meeting topics and formats?
- 6 . Do you keep track of examples of safety compliance and problems in your department?
- 7 . Does each safety meeting have an objective?
- 8 . Do you outline an agenda and presentation for each meeting?
- 9 . Are your presentations varied?
- 10 . Do you tie each meeting to on-the-job examples?
- 11 . Do you conduct regular brief informal safety meetings on the floor?
- 12 . Are meetings set up to encourage practice and participation?
- 13 . Do you evaluate the results of safety meetings?
- 14 . Do you use the evaluations to improve your meetings?

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City Safe is a publication of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust for the purposes of educating and informing cities about loss control methods and risk management. If you have any questions concerning KMIT, workers' compensation, or risk management that you would like to see answered in this newsletter, please direct those inquiries to:

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A Note from the Staff...

Safety issues tend to be the most overlooked aspect of local government. However, it is critically important that these issues be addressed. Poor safety practices lead to increased worker injuries which increase overall municipal expenses. As expenses increase, the level of services that cities can offer to their respective communities is reduced. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the employer, employee, and community if safety breaches are kept to a minimum.

Those of us who serve as staff to the KMIT organization really want to do as much as possible to assist our member cities. We aim to continue working to provide risk and claims management services along with affordable rates. Through the risk management, affordable provided

*Sincerely,
The KMIT Staff*

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