



# City Safe

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Number 4

A Guide To Assist In Training  
Employees About:

## Slips, Trips, and Falls

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## **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 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 work related accidents, subsequent workers' comp claims/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.

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*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.

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 hazards can cause you to fall on stairs?
3. What's most likely to make you fall on level ground?
4. What kind of situations can make floors dangerous?
5. What are some of the good housekeeping practices that can help prevent slips, trips, and falls?

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6. What kind of shoes should you wear to prevent slipping?
  7. What's the best overall rule to follow so you won't slip, trip, or fall?
  8. How do you "fall Correctly"?
  9. 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 success?



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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 for mats?
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 you 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?

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?**

Do you have issues you want to see covered in City Safe?  
If so, contact Bret Glendening by phone at (785) 354-9565  
or by email at [bglendening@ink.org](mailto:bglendening@ink.org).

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*City Safe is a publication of the League of Kansas Municipalities and the Kansas Municipal Insurance Trust for the purpose of educating and informing cities about loss control methods and risk management. Contents herein are not intended to provide specific legal or medical advice. Readers should seek advice on specific concerns from a qualified professional.*

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A Note from the "New Guy"....

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Bret Glendening and I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve KMIT and the League of Kansas Municipalities as a licensed insurance agent and Program Manager. I was born and raised in Plainville, Kansas. I received my bachelor's degree in Agriculture Economics and my master's degree in public administration (both from Kansas State University).

I look forward to meeting and getting to know many (if not all) of you in the coming months. Moreover, I look forward to serving you in the coming years. For now, I would like to wish you all a SAFE and productive summer and extend you an invitation: if there is anything I can do to assist you or your city become a "safer city", please call. You have my promise that I will do what I can to meet your needs.

Sincerely,

Bret Glendening  
Program Manager & KMIT Agent

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