

## **Trip Hazards Do's and Don'ts**

Slips, trips, and falls cannot be taken lightly. Consider:

- On average, falls account for about 15 percent of all occupational fatalities, second only to motor vehicle accidents.
- In addition, thousands of workers suffer nonfatal injuries from falls every year—many of them temporarily or permanently disabling.

One reason that falls are so common is that there are hazards everywhere. Employees can slip, trip, or fall in production areas, in offices, on stairwells, from ladders, off loading docks—and other places specific to your workplace.

### **Recognize the Hazards**

Common causes of slips, trips, and falls include:

- Messy, cluttered work areas.
- Tools, materials, cords, and other items lying on the floor in places where people walk.
- Poor visibility caused by inadequate lighting or burned-out bulbs.
- Not watching where you're going or carrying something you can't see over.
- Running or walking too fast.
- Spills and wet floors.
- Open drawers (a not-so-obvious trip hazard!).
- Uneven, defective flooring, worn stairs, or worn spots in carpets that nobody has reported or fixed.
- Failure to use handrails when going up or down the stairs.
- Not enough caution on ladders.
- Wearing shoes that are not appropriate for the work space or the job.

### **Eliminate Trip Hazards**

Many fall injuries occur on level ground when people trip over unexpected objects in their path. Help eliminate trip hazards by following these do's and don'ts.

#### **Do:**

- Keep work areas neat and tidy, putting tools, materials, and other items away after use.
- Pick up items off the floor, even if they didn't put them there.
- Step over or around obstructions, not on them.
- Walk slowly and change directions slowly, especially when carrying a load.
- Watch for changes in floor level—such as a few steps or a ramp up or down.
- Report lighting problems, such as burned-out bulbs, to maintenance right away.
- Use a flashlight if they need more light leaving the facility in the dark.

#### **Don't:**

- Don't leave boxes, bags, tools, or other materials on the floor.
- Don't block walkways with hand trucks, equipment, or materials.
- Don't leave cords or cables in walkways.
- Don't place anything on stairs.
- Don't leave drawers open.

## **Don't Slip Up on Slip Hazards**

It's easy to slip on wet or smooth surfaces, and down you go. Even a little slip can add up to a big injury. Here are some preventive measures:

- Put up signs or barriers to warn people when floors are wet or hazardous.
- Put down mats near entryways on rainy days.

In addition:

- Clean up spills, drips, and leaks immediately.
- Wear sensible shoes with nonskid soles, and wipe their feet when they come inside on wet days.
- Shuffle feet on slippery surfaces.
- Report slip hazards if they can't fix them.

*When we share the responsibility for safety in the workplace, everyone wins!!*