

Weekly Safety Tip

SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS

Slips, trips and, falls are the second highest cause of accidental deaths and injuries, behind motor vehicle accidents. Each year, almost two million disabling injuries and thousands of minor injuries occur on stairways. While slips, trips and falls are the cause of numerous injuries and deaths every day, they are among the easiest to correct.

SSOE's experienced architects, engineers and designers are in a unique position to address slips, trips, and falls at the very beginning of the design process and during renovation projects. Careful consideration should be given to cost, durability, aesthetics, and especially safety for walking and working surfaces. Choosing the right design is a giant step towards reducing slips, trips, and falls.

Tips for preventing slips, trips, and falls

- Always maintain a "three point contact." Keep one hand free and use handrails. Never climb stairs (or ladders) with objects in both hands. Get help or make an extra trip for safety.
- Use non-slip treads, landings, and abrasive stair nosing.
- Remove obstructions - keep walk and work surfaces clean and clutter free. Provide periodic inspections.
- Make sure there is adequate lighting so you can see where you are going.
- Wet surfaces should be protected by proper drainage or appropriate matting.
- Provide warning signs or high visibility paint to signify uneven surfaces and trip hazards.
- Wear shoes with appropriate soles that provide good traction. Consider the hazards such as oil and grease, uneven / sloped surfaces, uneven sidewalks and loose gravel.
- Scan your walkway for existing and potential hazards and take a detour to by-pass them.
- Limit your load to what you can safely handle to allow an unobstructed view of your path. Use wheels to push or pull your load if possible.
- Provide feedback and alerts to others when you see a slip, trip or fall hazard. If you cannot correct the hazard immediately, make a timely notification or Near Miss Report that could save a friend, co-worker or family member from experiencing a serious accident. Never walk by a hazard without doing something about it!
- Stay focused on what you are doing and know how to do it safely!

