



Weekly Safety Tip

Don't Fall for Slippery Conditions









“Walk Like a Penguin” on Ice and Snow

For additional information, check out the following websites.

Tinker Air Force Base — Modeling the Penguin
<http://www.tinker.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123372058>

Tips on How to Walk Safely Outside in Winter Ice and Snow
<http://bss.fnal.gov/fire/walking-safely-on-ice.pdf>

Winter weather is on the way and now is the time to prepare yourself for walking on snow and ice covered sidewalks which cause a substantial number of falls for pedestrians. Wet or icy surfaces, uneven pavement, glare, and poor visibility all increase the risk for falls and injury. A minor fall may only result in a bruised pride, however the potential is always there for serious injuries, such as broken bones or even fatal injuries.

-  Wear non-skid footwear that is appropriate for the weather and conditions. Shoes with smooth soles and higher heels provide less surface area and less traction on slippery surfaces. You might consider purchasing clip on cleats that will provide good traction on ice and snow.
-  Walk on the sidewalks if possible. If you must walk in the street, walk against the traffic and stay close to the curb. Realize that motorists may not be able to see you and they are not expecting a pedestrian in the roadway.
-  Crosswalks and intersections are usually the safest places to cross streets because road crews are more likely to keep them plowed and salted. Make sure traffic is stopped before venturing into an intersection or roadway.
-  Dress in bright or high visibility clothing, so that drivers can see you. Dress to stay warm but do not overdress as too many clothes can affect your mobility and balance and could cause a fall.
-  Slow down your walking pace and take smaller shuffling steps with your knees slightly bent. Keep your feet pointed slightly outward and keep your hands out of your pocket and at your side for greater balance. Note that the Tinker Air Force base promotes this same “Walk Like A Penguin” technique to help keep their personnel safe.
-  If you do find yourself falling backwards, make an effort to tuck your chin so that you don't hit your head, and try to relax your muscles. Tension in your body ensures that one hard surface – your body – will hit a second hard surface, the ground, with more force than necessary and that increases your chance of injury.