

SLIPS AND TRIPS IN THE WORKPLACE

One of the most common winter weather hazards is the risk of slipping and tripping. Slips and trips are the single biggest cause of injury at work. At this time of year you may find it useful to consider the most common slip and trip hazards and simple but effective actions you can take to help reduce the chances of anyone suffering slips or trips.

- **Poorer lighting conditions**

Carry out an inspection of your paths and premises. Then check to see if the lighting is adequate, particularly around steps or uneven ground. If the lighting levels are too low you will need to either install better lighting or failing that, use reflective tape or signs to do not use the pathways etc. before or after a certain time of day.

- **Leaves on the ground**

Fallen leaves create two separate hazards. Firstly, when they are wet or begin to decay they are very slippery and can cause people to lose their footing. Secondly, the build up of leaves can block the line of sight. Work Rail's excuse for delays – 'leaves on the tracks' – is not far from the truth. Leaves underneath such as uneven paving slabs can also be a hazard.

You will need to create a procedure for the removal of leaves at regular intervals and delegate someone to be in charge of this. You may also consider removing deciduous bushes or trees altogether and replacing them with evergreen varieties.

- **Reception area slips**

Many slip type accidents happen at building entrances as people are rushing to get out of the weather. These areas are often highly slippery when wet. Having signage saying 'wet floor' is not sufficient.

To help prevent such slipping, you may want to place mats across the doorways, making sure the edges do not become raised and trip people over. For the longer term you might consider changing the entrance flooring to a more durable material. You may also consider fitting a canopy to the entrance, when entering the building.

- **Frost, snow or ice**

Firstly, identify the areas most likely to be affected by frost, snow or ice. These include building entrances, car parks, pedestrian walkways including any short cuts, ramps and areas which are constantly wet or in the shade.

During periods of cold weather, it is sensible to check the weather forecast. The Met Office, BBC Weather or the Highways Agency website can provide this. When bad weather is forecast, you need to be ready to implement your Action Plans.

Your Action Plan may include:

- Putting a procedure in place to deal with the hazard.
- Use warning signage and cones to warn people and barrier off the others.
- Communication is paramount; ensure that the most likely to be slippery.
- If warning cones are used, ensure they are eventually be ignored.
- Make sure your guttering and downpipes are clear so that the discharge from the down pipes does not spread across walkways.

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Severe Weather Risk

RA Ref No: SW01

Assessor

Assessment Date

Review Dates / Initials

Assessment location:

Persons at risk

Frequency

Details

Staff

Contractors

Visitors

Gen. Public / Others

disabled?

Comments

No ☐No ☐No ☐No ☐Hz
No.

Hazard description

How are persons affected

1.

*E.g. [Slippery road surfaces caused
by rain, ice or snow]**[Vehicles and pedestrians will be
unable to stop or manoeuvre qu*

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Existing controls

Further controls / action

*[Nothing in place. Reliant on
drivers own actions]**[Early gritting. Restrict access to
car park]*

Probability (P) 5=very likely, 4=likely, 3=quite possible, 2=possible, 1=unlikely

Severity (S) 5=fatal, 4=severe, 3=moderate, 2=slight, 1=negligible

Risk (R) 0-8=low risk, no action required. 9-15=medium risk, ensure ad

25=high risk, stop operation & implement control measures

SAMPLE

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Hz No.	Hazard description	How are persons affected
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Existing controls	Further controls / action

Probability (P)	5=very likely, 4=likely, 3=quite possible, 2=possible, 1=unlikely
Severity (S)	5=fatal, 4=severe, 3=moderate, 2=slight, 1=negligible
Risk (R)	0-8=low risk, no action required. 9-15=medium risk, ensure adequate controls

16-20=high risk, stop operation & implement control measures