



Slips, trips and falls can result in all types of serious injuries and sometimes leave the victim with a lifelong disability or even lead to death.

Slips, trips and falls account for roughly 20% of all work related injuries. This incident is second only to auto accidents. This is why slip and fall awareness and protection are essential elements of personal safety.

## What Are Slips, Trips and Falls?

### Slips

Slips occur when there is too little friction between one's footwear and the walking surface. Common causes of slips are:

- Wet or oily surfaces;
- Weather hazards;
- Loose or unanchored rugs; and/or
- Flooring with changing degree of traction.

### Trips

Trips occur when one's foot collides with an object causing you to lose balance. Common causes of trips are:

- Obstructed view;
- Poor lighting;
- Poor housekeeping;
- Wrinkled carpet;
- Cords across walkways; or
- Uneven walking surfaces.

### Falls

Falls occur when one loses balance resulting in a drop to the ground from the effects of gravity. Common causes of falls are:

- Improper use of equipment;
- Horseplay;
- Unfamiliar with work area;
- Overreaching; or
- Skipping steps.

## OSHA Regulations

Slips, trips and fall standards are contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, under the heading "Subpart D" or 29 CFR 1910.22-30. This area covers cause and prevention of slip, trip and fall injuries.

Housekeeping, ladder safety, floor openings and stairways are included in Subpart D.



## Environmental Health and Safety Training

Environmental Health and Safety conducts fall protection training for employees who work in areas with fall hazards of greater than six feet such as roofers and engineers.

Ladder Safety training is also conducted by Environmental Health and Safety and requires all employees who use ladders as part of their duties to complete the course.

Training schedule is posted at <http://safety.uchicago.edu>

## How to Minimize the Risk

1. Identify all potential fall hazards prior to beginning work.
2. Never jump from any height.
3. Practice good housekeeping to prevent any manmade hazards.
4. Wear shoes that have adequate tread for the work surface.
5. Do not skip stairs when walking up or down them.
6. Ensure "Wet Floor" signs are in place when floors are slippery.
7. Contact Environmental Health and Safety if there are areas you believe need additional protection or evaluation.
8. If you see an unsafe item such a broken handrail, contact Facilities Services immediately to have the issue corrected.
9. If your job requires use of fall protection equipment, ensure you have proper training and equipment.
10. When using ladders, ensure the equipment is in good condition and used at the proper angle of 4:1 with three rungs past working surface.



## If you see something, say something!

The best way to avoid an incident is to survey the work area and address all potential concerns prior to beginning work. *Avoidance leads to injury!*