

Slips, Trips & Falls

The average person takes approximately 18,000 steps every day! There are nearly 13 million slip, trip and fall injuries every year that result in lost workdays, broken bones, bad backs, even permanent disability and death. You can prevent painful injuries both on and off the job if you understand how slips and falls happen.

Unlike what we've seen in the cartoons and in the movies a million times, in real life, not many people actually slip on banana peels. And while the results may produce a few chuckles in the theater, falls are nothing to laugh at. In fact, some estimates put the number of **Disabling Injuries** resulting from falls at over 30,000 per year. The **Number of Deaths** is close to 12,000 a year. And the fact that about **One in ten** of these deaths happen in the workplace is the primary reason for this article. Slip, trip and fall accidents can be drastically reduced if we would follow one simple piece of advice: **Watch where you're going**. Walking is such a common activity that most of us pay little attention to potential hazards. However, I'd like to ask each of you to put a little more thought into getting where you're going safely. Take the time to pay attention to the more common fall hazards cited by the National Safety Council:

- Hidden steps
- Loose, irregular surfaces
- Smooth surfaces
- Wet spots
- Oil and grease
- Unsafe chairs
- Moving too fast
- Obstructed aisles
- Bad lighting
- Improper shoes

It is important to realize that more accidental deaths are attributed to falls than any other cause except motor vehicle accidents. The percentages hold true across industries, gender lines and age. The only exception is that the number of fall related deaths are even higher among the elderly.

Preventing slips and falls has to be a team effort. Walking around a spill or stepping over an open drawer might keep you safe, but what about the next person who walks by?

By correcting the hazard or reporting it you keep not only yourself safe, but your co-workers as well.