



## Don't Fall For It!

Ranking only second to vehicle-related accidents, slips, trips, and falls are a leading cause of injury and death in the utility/construction industry. Slips and trips can result in everything from mere embarrassment to pulled muscles as you overcompensate while attempting not to fall. Falls are usually divided into two areas – falls at the same level, and falls from a height. As we know, falls can result in everything from bruised pride to serious injury or death.

Let's look at slips, trips, and falls at the "same level" and how they can be reduced. Hazards on walking and working surfaces can be controlled. If you incorporate these four prevention steps in your safety plan, you will start to reduce the slips, trips, and falls at your location.

### **Spotting Hazards:**

Scan ahead while you walk and remove hazards that you encounter. Housekeeping plays a big part in preventing slips, trips, and falls. Essentially, by keeping the area clean and free of clutter, you are removing the hazards, preventing injury to yourself and others.

### **Maneuvering Around Hazards:**

If you spot a hazard or slippery area, slow down, keep a steady footing and look where you place your feet. Shorten your stride to keep your center of balance under you. Walk like a duck, with your feet pointed slightly outward, creating a stable base and making wide corners. Correct the hazard, if possible.

### **Alerting others of the hazard:**

Alert others of the hazard by the use of cones or other barriers.

### **Choosing the Appropriate Footwear:**

Choose your footwear to meet the environment that you will encounter. Sole patterns are engineered for different work areas.

Other ways to prevent falls is to improve the lighting. As we age, it takes more light for us to see clearly. Poor lighting can impair your vision and create hazardous situations. If lighting is poor, use a flashlight at the work site.

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