

# ■ Slips, Trips and Falls



ALMOST EVERY WEEK someone in our union gets hurt because of a slip, trip or fall. The outcome can range from a bruised ego to a broken bone.

Too often the response to one of these incidents is to tell the victim they should have been more careful. While it is true that everyone needs to remain aware of their surroundings in order to avoid getting hurt, there are some workplace conditions that need to be addressed also.



- Inadequate footwear for a particular task.
- Lack of handrails.
- Poor lighting.

## ■ PREVENTION

Slips, trips and falls can often be easily prevented by taking care to eliminate the hazards listed above. None of these hazards is difficult to prevent with a little bit of thought.

The chart on the next page is based on a similar chart produced by the Australian government. It is a very common sense approach to injury prevention.



## PESH WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

PESH has several standards or rules that will help prevent slips trips and falls.

Walking/working surfaces 1910.21  
– 1910.30

Sanitation/Housekeeping 1910.141

PPE for footwear 1910.136

## ■ CAUSES OF SOME SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

The following conditions can all contribute to slips, trips and falls:

- Spills (whether wet or dry substances).
- Obstacles in walkways. Cables, wires, boxes, and other items placed in walkways create a hazard.
- Floor mats and rugs. Many injuries are caused by tripping on the edge of a rug or mat.
- Slippery floors.
- Changing from a wet to a dry surface.
- Uneven floors; changes in levels of floors and sloping floors.

<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>SUGGESTED ACTION</b>
Spills (wet and dry)	Clean up spills immediately. If a liquid is greasy, make sure that the proper cleaning product is used.
Cables and cords in the walkway	Position equipment to avoid cables and cords in the walkway. Look at using overhead drop down or retractable cords.
Housekeeping	Keep work areas free of garbage and debris.
Floor rugs and mats	Make sure rugs and mats are secured and do not have loose or curled edges.
Change from wet to dry floors	Provide suitable footwear where appropriate. Provide warnings of risk. Provide doormats and non-slip mats where needed.
Changes of floor levels	Improve lighting. Add signs and treads or floor markings.
Sloped floors	Improve lighting. Provide hand rails. Use floor markings.
Inadequate footwear for a particular task	Make sure work shoes have proper soles for the work areas.
Poor lighting	Improve lighting levels and place the lights to make sure even more lighting is there for all floor levels.

