

Toolbox Talks

G111

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Introduction

The major cause of 'lost time' in the workplace, slips, trips and falls are a recognised hazard, but many of these accidents can be avoided by following health and safety guidelines.

Refresher Points

To prevent slips, trips and falls that are caused by poor housekeeping, be sure to keep walkways free of obstructions. 'Clean up as you go', and in particular clean up spillages as soon as practically possible; use a 'wet floor' sign when appropriate. Cables should wherever feasible run by the wall, but if they have to cross the floor, either suspend them, or make them secure on the floor. Ideally consider this hazard when you design your work environment – with forethought, the problems caused by cables can be prevented. If a cable is left unsecured, it's only a matter of time before it causes an accident.

Unsuitable footwear is another major cause of slips, trips and falls at work. You have a responsibility to wear footwear that is appropriate to your work and environment, so put functionality before fashion.

Other hazards which may cause slips, trips and falls may be unavoidable, but the risk can be minimised. For example, when using ladders, steps or scaffolding, inspect the equipment prior to use, wear a harness when necessary, climb using two hands, and check that the environment in which the equipment will be used is safe, for example, the ground is firm and level.

Finally, switch on the light when you work to prevent accidents that are caused by inadequate lighting. If you feel that there isn't sufficient light available, report the matter to your line manager.

Remember
for footwear, think functionality before fashion

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