

The *BSO Plus Safety Topic* is a review designed from the BSO Plus agenda. This safety topic is your way to stay current on the safety information over the 3 years, so please ensure you submit the completed test to your employer for record retention.

## SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS



Slips, trips and falls are some of the leading causes of lost-time injuries at work in Ontario. They can occur at any workplace. According to the Ministry of Labour:

- Almost 20 per cent of all lost-time injury claims in Ontario involve slips, trips and falls
- 65% of all fall-related injuries are from "same level"

### Recognizing Slip, Trip & Fall Hazards

Certain conditions can lead to slips, trips and falls, not only in the workplace but also at home. Being aware of your surroundings can help you recognize when a slip, trip, or fall incident may occur. Some common causes of slips, trips, and falls are:

- Poor housekeeping conditions
- Wet or slippery surfaces
- Inappropriate footwear
- Poor lighting
- Environmental factors (ice, snow)
- Change in elevation (stairs and ramps)
- Change in work surface (soft ground, carpeting, tile, etc.)

In addition to these physical conditions, personal factors such as not being aware of your surroundings, rushing, taking short cuts, and texting while walking can lead to slips, trips and falls.



### Preventing Slip, Trip & Fall Incidents

#### What workers can do:

- Before starting work, look around your work area to become familiar with your surroundings
- Don't walk backwards
- Keep the area at the top and base of ladders clear
- Pay attention to your footing when carrying things
- Walk, don't run
- Clean up after yourself
- Correct slip, trip, or fall hazards when you see them; or if you can't safely fix it yourself, you must report it to your supervisor [OHSA, s.28 (1)(c)(d)]

## What employers and supervisors can do:

### SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS BE ALERT



- Advise and train workers about risks in their job and in the workplace
- Encourage workers to participate in the workplace's health and safety program through reporting of slip, trip and fall hazards
- Develop a housekeeping plan for the removal of debris from walkways, stairways, and work areas
- Include site-specific guidelines in your jobsite orientation
- Give safety talks on housekeeping
- Keep building entrances clear
- Put down sand and salt in winter
- Instruct equipment operators to avoid driving on soft ground around designated walkways because the tires or tracks can create ruts in the ground
- Fill low-lying areas with gravel to reduce the accumulation of water, ice and mud
- Provide enough disposal bins around the jobsite to make it easy for workers to put their garbage in the right place

The following criteria are what the employer should consider when establishing safe work practices for your workplace:

- characteristics of physical work area
- weather conditions (snow, ice, rain, etc.)
- tasks performed
- workers' work practices

When a hazard has been identified, *the employer must take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers.* Employers must provide information, instruction and supervision to workers to protect their health and safety.