

Slip, trip and fall incidents are the leading cause of accidental injury in the workplace, at home and in communities. Over 25,000 deaths are caused by falls each year in the United States, and the toll is increasing dramatically. An aging population is a key contributing factor to the problem because older people are more at risk of falling and are more likely to sustain serious injuries when they fall. While no walking surface can be made completely “fall proof,” a formal slip and fall prevention program can dramatically reduce the risk of incidents.

Every organization is at risk for slip and fall incidents that affect employees and the general public. To help reduce slip and fall accidents and related costs, your organization should implement a comprehensive prevention program, which includes the following steps:

- 1. Assign Responsibility:** Although slip and fall prevention is everyone’s job, you should designate a program coordinator to make sure all slip and fall prevention activities are completed in a timely manner. The coordinator can also be the go-to person for employees to report any slip and fall hazards they encounter.
- 2. Train Staff:** Train all employees on the various slip and fall hazards they may encounter, as well as on practices and procedures to reduce the risk of slip and fall accidents. Train maintenance staff on proper floor cleaning procedures, snow and ice management procedures, and appropriate use of warning devices or barricades.
- 3. Audit:** Inspect walking surfaces regularly, both indoors and out. If snow or ice accumulation is possible in your area, inspect outdoor walkways daily during the winter and early spring seasons. Keep in mind that pavement temperature, not air temperature, determines whether walkways are icy or just wet. Inspect hard-surfaced floors



near building entrances frequently throughout the day during wet or snowy conditions.

- 4. Mitigate Hazards:** Implement immediate corrective measures to address any known slip and fall hazards. Short-term “quick fixes,” and warning or barricade devices may be appropriate until permanent repairs can be scheduled.
- 5. Investigate Accidents:** A formal accident investigation program helps quickly determine the root cause of any slip and fall accident and take prompt action to prevent recurrence.

For Additional Information

For assistance in developing a slip and fall prevention program, visit www.emcins.com, select **Loss Control**, then **Safety by Topic**, then **Slip and Fall** to find online training, self-inspection checklists, prevention guide and program template.

