

Avoiding Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards

Slips and falls are a common injury that can take place on your property. Although these accidents are frequent, most are preventable.

DO YOUR PART

There are various ways to suffer slips and falls. Tenants, patrons or employees can slip and lose their balance, trip over objects left in the walkway or simply fall from an elevated position to the ground.

Injuries caused by slips, trips and falls range from sprained or strained muscles and joints, to broken bones and head injury. There are several precautions you should take to ensure the safety of your staff, the safety of your tenants and the safety of the public. To avoid slips and falls, have your staff be on the lookout for foreign substances on the floor, such as:

- Deposits of water or ice
- Food or beverages
- Grease or oil
- Product spills
- Soap
- Other debris

Even small quantities are enough to cause a fall and an injury, and potential liability for your business.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING TIPS

Third party workers and staff need to beware of possible tripping hazards. Below are some suggested housekeeping tips:

- Employees and the public, especially children, should be asked to walk instead of run.
- Keep walkways, hallways and stairways clean and dry at all times as wet, icy or cluttered areas present a slip and trip hazard and can promote the growth of infection causing microbes like mould, fungi and bacteria.
- Snowy and rainy weather requires a doormat at each entrance to allow for wiping of shoes.
- Remove all objects and clutter from hallways, exits and passageways and make sure any tenants know to do the same.
- Use floor or ceiling electrical plugs for power to avoid running a cord down a long hallway and ensure that extension cords, tools, carts and other items are properly barricaded off.
- Use floor mats while surfaces are drying after cleaning to provide traction and display warning signs to alert others of a wet floor.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE SLIPS, TRIPS OR FALLS



- 1 Assist the injured person in finding medical treatment. Call an ambulance if necessary.
- 2 Record the names and contact information of any witnesses. Obtain and record detailed descriptions of the incident from the victim and witnesses.
- 3 Refer any discussions with the claimant to your insurer. **NEVER ADMIT LIABILITY!**
- 4 Take pictures of the area where the incident occurred. If possible, photograph the footwear that the injured person was wearing.
- 5 Document the incident. This may help to establish a defense for a claim presented at a later date and help your insurer analyze the cause of the incident.
- 6 Report the incident to your insurer. Provide them with:
a. Details of the incident
b. Information about what you did to avoid the incident.
- 7 Investigate potential causes and take steps to prevent and/or respond better to similar incidents in the future.

HOUSEKEEPING TIPS CONTINUED

- In areas prone to slipping (entryways, hallways), use a no-skid wax product to clean.
- While washing the floor, have staff members use protective footwear to prevent falling and have signage to indicate wet surfaces for the public walking by.
- There should be designated walking areas that are regularly maintained and safe from hazards.
- Stretch out bulging carpets in hallways to prevent trips and falls.
- Everyone should be encouraged to hold on to handrails when using stairs or ramps.
- If a tenants or staff member is carrying a heavy load that hampers the ability to properly ascend or descend stairs, he or she should be directed toward the nearest elevator.
- Repair broken light fixtures and replace bulbs for adequate visibility.
- Be sure to fill in any potholes in the yard or to fix other areas where there may be a trip or fall hazard.
- Use strong ladders to reach as opposed to standing on small stools or boxes.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The worst falls are from elevated positions, such as ladders, and can result in serious injury or death. It is crucial that ladders that are not in use are stored safely away from public areas.

If a ladder is in use, ensure that it is proper length, in good condition and keep the base placed on a firm surface 1/4 metre away from the wall for every metre of height.



Even if you take all the right precautions, incidents can still occur. Contact Lloyd Sadd today to learn about your coverage options when it comes to Real Estate risks.

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