

**SONIC****America's
Drive-In®**

Safety Matters

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If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please send your email addresses to renee.rhodes@imacorp.com.

SLIPS AND FALLS

Slips and falls are a leading cause of workplace injuries. What do experts recommend as the single most important step to take in preventing slips and falls? Simple – keep floors clean, dry and free of obstruction. When it comes to safeguards against slips and falls, nothing is more important than good housekeeping.

When walking through a work area, look for spills, grease spots or dust (flour and machine byproducts can be highly slippery). Water tracked in on wet or snowy days can create a major hazard. Look around and be aware of wet areas or objects on the floor, and then take the time to do something about it. Clean up the hazard or place cones or wet floor signs nearby, warning of the danger. People can walk on extremely slippery surfaces by modifying their speed and stride, provided they know about the dangerous condition. Lack of warning can cause problems – an unexpected shift from a smooth to a slick surface heightens the likelihood of a slip or fall.



Look for signs of flooring change. Changes in lighting and floor color can conceal a change in friction or angle between adjacent surfaces. Choose footwear according to floor surface and weather conditions.



Consider slips and falls when doing a job. Some tasks, such as pushing loads, may require special attention to slip resistant floor surfaces or carefully selected sole material and treads. For some jobs, better lighting or a stable brace is helpful.



Slips can occur because of how you walk on a surface. Some simple things you can do to minimize your chance of slipping and falling would be to wear appropriate footwear; watch where you're going; take slow, short steps where slip potential is high; and use hand holds where possible.

CREATE GOOD HOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES

Good housekeeping is critical. Safety and housekeeping go hand-in-hand. If your facility's housekeeping habits are poor, the result may be a higher incidence of employee injuries, ever-increasing insurance costs and regulatory citations. If an organization's facilities are noticeably clean and well organized, it is a good indication that its overall safety program is effective as well.

Proper housekeeping is a routine. It is an ongoing procedure that is simply done as a part of each worker's daily performance. To create an effective housekeeping program, there are three simple steps to get you started:

PLAN AHEAD – Know what needs to be done, who's going to do it and what the particular work area should look like when you are done.

ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES – It may be necessary to assign a specific person or group of workers to clean up, although personal responsibility for cleaning up after himself/herself is preferred.

IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM – Establish housekeeping procedures as a part of the daily routine.



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REDUCE WET OR SLIPPERY SURFACES

Walking surfaces account for a significant portion of injuries reported by state agencies. The most frequently reported types of surfaces where these injuries occur include the following: parking lots, sidewalks (or lack of), food preparation areas and floors in general.

Traction on outdoor surfaces can change considerably when weather conditions change. Those conditions can then affect indoor surfaces as moisture is tracked in by pedestrian traffic. Traction-control procedures should be constantly monitored for their effectiveness.

- Keep parking lots and sidewalks clean and in good repair condition
- When snow and ice are present, remove or treat these elements. In some extreme cases, it may be necessary to suspend use of the area
- Use adhesive striping material or anti-skid paint whenever possible

Indoor control measures can help reduce the incidence of slips and falls.

- Use moisture-absorbent mats with beveled edges frequently wet areas such as in front of sink or ice machine. Make sure they have backing material that will not slide on the floor
- Display "Wet Floor" signs as needed
- Use anti-skid adhesive tape in troublesome areas
- Clean up spills immediately. Create a procedure for taking the appropriate action when someone causes or comes across a food or drink spill

AVOID CREATING OBSTACLES IN AISLES AND WALKWAYS

Injuries can also result in from trips caused by obstacles, clutter, materials and equipment in aisles, corridors, entranceways and stairwells. Proper housekeeping in work and traffic areas is still the most effective control measure in avoiding the proliferation of these types of hazards. This means having policies or procedures in place and allowing time for cleaning the area.

- Keep all work areas, passageways, storerooms and service areas clean and orderly
- Avoid stringing cords, cables or air hoses across hallways or in any designated aisle
- Avoid leaving boxes in the aisles
- Encourage safe work practices such as closing file cabinet drawers after use and picking up loose items from the floor
- Conduct periodic inspections for slip and trip hazards

CREATE AND MAINTAIN PROPER LIGHTING

Poor lighting in the workplace is associated with an increase in accidents.

- Use proper illumination in walkways, staircases, ramps, hallways, and dock areas
- Keep work areas well-lit and clean
- Upon entering a darkened room, always turn on the light first
- Keep poorly lit walkways clear of clutter and obstructions
- Keep areas around light switches clear and accessible
- Repair fixtures, switches and cords immediately if they malfunction

You have resources available!



Sonic Insurance Program Resource Portal

URL: <http://www.imacorp-sip.com>
Username: sonicip (case sensitive)
Password: footlong (case sensitive)

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If you have experienced an accident, the IMA, Inc. team is here to assist you. Should you have any questions or problems in reporting a claim, or if you need any other assistance in the handling of your claims, please contact your IMA claim advocate, at 1-800-284-9447.

Contact IMA Risk Control Specialist Renee Rhodes or Brenda Rice if you would like assistance with a comprehensive risk assessment including safety audits and development of safety policies and procedures. IMA is also available to speak at manager's meetings and regional meetings to cover claims trends, claims strategies, and loss prevention measures.