

Winter Slips, Trips and Falls

No matter how well the snow and ice is removed from streets and sidewalks, you will likely encounter some slippery surfaces when walking outdoors in the winter. Each year numerous employees are injured from slips and falls. It is important to be continually aware of the dangers and to walk safely on ice and slippery surfaces.

Footwear

- Wear suitable outdoor footwear (low heels, warm, waterproof, ice/snow traction, etc.) Leather-soled and high-heeled shoes can be especially hazardous in winter.
- When entering buildings, remove snow and water from footwear to prevent creating wet slippery conditions indoors. Change into dry indoor footwear where possible.



Exiting car

1. Swing both legs out
2. Place feet solidly on ground
3. Hold door and frame/handholds for support and to catch yourself if you slip
4. Keep in three-point contact with high vehicles when mounting or descending



Walking

- When walking on slippery surfaces slow down and take smaller steps. Give yourself enough time to get where you need to go without rushing.
- Don't assume that just because you have the right-of-way, traffic will stop – they may not brake early enough.
- Keep your eyes on where you are going – not on your phone.
- Avoid carrying loads where possible. Only carry loads you can see over.
- Keep both hands free to help you maintain your balance, rather than in your pockets.
- Watch where you are walking, especially for potential trouble spots such as stairways or ramps. Use the handrails on stairways.
- Walk around rather than over snow banks or other obstacles or areas that haven't been salted/sanded.
- Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them.
- Take special care when exiting buildings.



If you start to fall

- Avoid putting your arms out to break your fall. You are likely to break an arm or wrist. Instead, relax, go limp and let your thighs, hips and shoulders contact the ground in sequence.
- If you fall backwards, try to keep your head forward (raised) to reduce the chances of striking it on a hard surface.

Helping each other

- If you notice an icy spot on common walkways, steps, ramps or around entrances/exits; proactively sprinkle some of the salt/sand left in buckets at door entrances, door exits and in designated spots in parking lots to help yourself and others.
- Immediately report larger slippery surfaces or snowed in areas that you encounter at your workplace to Maintenance and if possible mark with a warning sign.

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!

