Walking Working Surfaces Meeting Kit



WHAT□S AT STAKE

Walking-working surfaces are very important parts of any manufacturing, construction or any other general business as well. Sound housekeeping habits and safety protocol that flow from this principle provide the bedrock of walking/working surface safety.

WHAT□S THE DANGER

HAZARDS/DANGERS OF WALKING/WORKING SURFACES

Slip or trip and fall injuries are major cause of injuries and fatalities in the construction industry. They can happen from slippery surfaces, uneven ground, and objects blocking pathways. Injuries can be very serious. Here are the most common types of injuries resulting from a slip or trip and fall:

Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs). TBIs happen when a person hits their head on the ground when they fall. Brain injuries can range from minor injuries small concussions, bumps, and bruises to major injuries like skull fractures, hematomas, and subarachnoid hemorrhage.

Spinal Cord Injuries. Spinal cord injuries can happen when a person hits the ground with their back or twists and overexerts themselves to avoid a fall. Spinal cord injuries can include slipped discs, hernias, and even paralysis. There are also a number of unpleasant side effects like loss of mobility, muscle spasms, and fatigue.

Broken Hips Or Pelvis. Broken hips and pelvis bones are a common injury senior citizens sustain from a fall. Hip and pelvis fractures almost always require surgery. A broken hip or pelvis can permanently impact a person□s mobility.

Shoulder Or Neck Injury. Neck injuries can range from muscle sprains to spinal injuries to even paralysis. Shoulder injuries from falls usually result in shoulder dislocation, torn nerves, or collarbone breaks.

Limb Fractures. Limb fractures happen when the force of the impact breaks a bone in a person□s arms or legs. Limb fractures usually always require surgeries that have long recovery periods.

Torn Ligaments, Tendons, And Muscles. Torn ligaments, tendons, and muscles are extremely painful injuries. Patients rarely ever regain full mobility after these types of injuries.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

WALKING/WORKING SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR WORKERS

1. **Keep walking surfaces clean and free of clutter.** By keeping walkways clear, you can quickly reduce the potential for injury.
2. **Stairways & Handrails**. Ask these questions:

- Do your stairways have handrails?
- Are the top and bottom stair marked with reflective tape?
- Have you removed any unsecured rugs or carpets from the stairs or landings?

1. **Manage cords.** Try to run cables behind walls or under carpets to keep them hidden. Install power outlets, internet connections and phone jacks in easily accessible locations to avoid running cables across walkways.
2. **Lighting.** Proper lighting inside and outside of the workplace can help illuminate areas that may be common places for employees or customers to trip or fall. Proper lighting (such as spotlights or illuminated steps), you can reduce the chance that an individual will slip or fall.
3. **Signage.** Uneven ground, or loose rocks will call attention to the hazard and increase awareness and attentiveness.
4. **Step stools.** Providing ladders and accessible step stools can help reduce the chances of a fall by helping employees reach heights safely.
5. **Footwear.** The footwear you chose to wear to a worksite has a huge impact on if you are safe. You should not wear tennis shoes on a worksite, always wear work boots. Your work boots should be the proper fit with treads to reduce the risk of slips, trips, and falls. To reduce your risks:

- Wear work boots that fit snugly and that have slip-resistant soles.
- Clean the treads of your shoes regularly.
- Inspect the soles of your work boots and make sure they are intact and that you have proper treads.

1. **Walking.** How you walk has a big impact on your risk of slips, trips, and falls. Ways to reduce these risks include:

- Take your time and do not run.
- Pay attention to where you are walking.
- Use light sources such as flashlights or installed light sources if your walkways are dark.
- Make sure if you are carrying materials or moving materials that you can see the walkways in front of you.
- Always look for spills when walking.

1. **Check floor conditions, inside and out.** Make sure there are no cracks or holes in building flooring or in the pavement outside.
2. **Non-skid throw rugs on slippery surfaces.** Rugs are an easy solution on otherwise slippery surfaces, but just make sure to add non-skid padding underneath the rug to prevent it from slipping out from underneath someone.
3. **Clean up spills immediately.** If you have a spill, clean it up immediately. When a spill occurs, immediately place warning signs around the hazard and then tackle the cleanup process.

WALKING/WORKING SURFACE TAKEAWAYS

- Workroom floors must be clean and dry, and employers must account for weather-related hazards (such as snow or ice), loose boards, corrosion, spills, and other hazards.

- When wet processes are used in commercial food processing plants, employers must install drainage and provide dry standing places (such as floor mats).
- Employers must ensure that work surfaces can support the maximum intended load designed for that surface.
- Employees must have a safe means of access to and from all walking-working surfaces.
- All walking-working surfaces must be inspected regularly and maintained in safe, working condition.

FINAL WORD

The good news is that most accidents are preventable. It is critical to frequently survey your work environment to avoid potential issues. Proactive attention to hazards will ultimately help keep your employees and customers safe and out of harm□s way.