Same Level Falls

One Step at a Time

Goal: Prevent Same Level Falls

This training session will provide you with the tools and information to identify and correct those conditions and work practices which could result in same level falls. Preventing same level falls requires the involvement and cooperation of management, employees, custodial and facility maintenance staff.

Strategies for preventing same level falls

* Identify slip and trip potential hazards
* Take corrective actions
* Utilize the hierarchy of controls
* Investigate all same level fall incidents

Consider

* Maintaining **“Situational Awareness”** will not prevent all same level fall accidents
* All **walking surfaces** present the potential for slips or trips
* You have a **responsibility for the safety** of your co-workers and those around you

Floor hierarchy of controls

* Most Effective Controls: Select/design floor surfaces and layout
* Moderately Effective Controls: Post barricades and/or close of work areas
* Least Effective Controls: Post signage (e.g. wet floors)

slip and trip potential

Most common risk factors

* People
* Footwear
* Flooring
* Contamination and Obstacles

People

* Physical condition: Major factor for the Elderly
* Prescription medications
* Standing for extended periods of time
* Failure to use the handrail

footwear

* Keep your soles in good condition
* High heels can be unstable on stairs and can get caught in cracks
* Adjust your stride when floor hazards are present

Flooring

Mats

* Place walk off mats at entrances
* Limit the difference in heights between flooring surfaces and mats
* Sufficient running length (Rain: 8-10 steps, Dry: 6-8 steps)
* Should not be able to see footprints after stepping off the mat
* No curled-up edges on mats or holes

Floor Selection and Treatment

* Surfacing application and treatments may increase slip resistance
* Patch testing of prospective material is recommended before a broad application
* Carpeting is also an option for the control of slips

Cleaning and Treatment

* Different types of floor offer different levels of slip resistance (Marble/Granite, Terrazzo, and Vinyl Composition Tiles are all slippery when wet)
* Flat surfaces are slippery when wet
* Bumps (i.e. diamond plate steel) may provide little traction
* Depressions (i.e. acid wash concrete) may provide better traction when clean
* Sharp protrusions (coated surfaces with abrasive sand) provide better traction when wet
* Post barricades when slip hazards cover an entire walkway
* Consider closing the areas (e.g. closing the restroom during cleaning)
* Post wet floor signage (Remove signage immediately after cleaning)

Floor Testing

* Consider testing floors using a tribometer to measure the slip resistance
* ANSI A1264.2 suggests a slip resistance guideline of 0.5 for walking surfaces under wet or dry conditions
* Ramps and stairways require a higher level of slip resistance

Contamination and Obstacles

Obstacles

* Ensure there is suitable walkway through the workplace (include parking lots).
* Keep walkways clear, no obstructions, cords, furniture, pallets, etc.

Housekeeping

* Develop cleaning and maintenance procedures, including immediate response, routine operations, remedial measures, and reporting requirements
* Train housekeeping staff
* Encourage reporting of locations where repeated spills occur

Fall investigation

* Investigate the fall incident as soon after the occurrence as possible while recollections are fresh
* Certain controls (e.g. barricades, signage) may need to be implemented immediately to protect other pedestrians from the hazardous condition
* Standardized forms should be used to document fall accidents
* Fall type, location information, photographs, testing records should all be kept as part of the record.
* Proper retainment and storage of photos and security video should be part of the process
* Compile and review of fall incident reports
* Plot slip and fall incidents on a map
* Determine any areas in need of further attention (floor testing or cleaning)