

USFK Safety Gram



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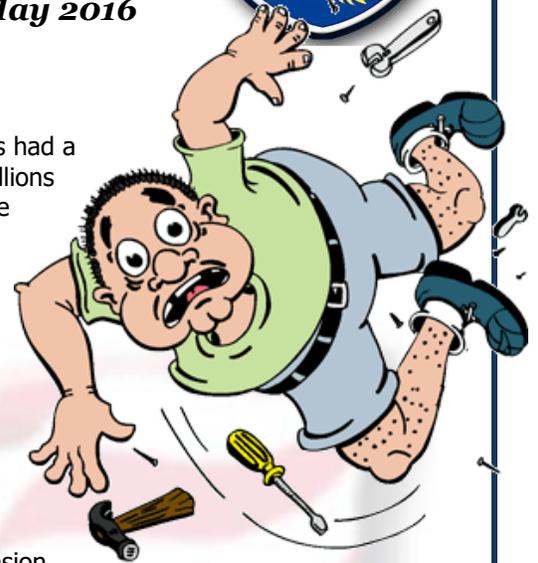
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Stay Safe on Your Feet

It's easy to take the subject of falls lightly - unless you or someone you know has had a serious fall. Then you realize how deadly this commonplace accident can be. Millions of people are injured or killed by falls every year. Most of these falls occur on the same level. That means they do not involve a fall from a height above ground level. Instead, most falls occur from slipping on a slick surface, or tripping over an object.

Slips, Trips, and Falls, Knowing What to Avoid:

- ◆ **Slips:** You slip when your foot loses traction on a wet or worn surface. This accounts for nearly two-thirds of falls in the workplace. Non-slip footwear and low heels help prevent these falls, but you must also be on the lookout for foreign substances on the floor, such as spilled liquids or debris. Even small quantities of these substances can be dangerous.
- ◆ **Trips:** Tripping hazards include trash or unused material left in aisles, extension cords strewn across walkways and tools not put away after use. Trips can also occur from broken or cracked walking surfaces, different elevations which are unmarked, torn carpets, loose or curled mats and slippery finishes.
- ◆ **Falls:** Falls are common while climbing stairs or a ladder, or when working at heights. Never run on stairs, but do use the handrail. Keep stairs repaired, well-lighted and uncluttered. Use the correct ladder for the job. Lock the spreaders on a stepladder, and set it on a stable base. When leaning a ladder against a wall or tree, for every four feet the ladder goes up, take the base out one foot from the wall. Tie the top and base or have someone hold the base.



Here are some tips for fall prevention:

- ◆ Keep clutter picked up. Common causes of falls are debris, tools, and materials on the floor.
- ◆ Arrange work spaces so there are clear passages for walking. Remove or cover cords and cables on walking routes. Store boxes of materials away from traffic areas. Close desk and cabinet drawers and doors as soon as you use them. Many accidents are caused by tripping over them.
- ◆ Keep walking surfaces free of water, oil, and mud. Watch especially for slippery surfaces on sidewalks, stairways, in entryways, around machinery, in laboratories, in lunch areas, and washrooms.
- ◆ Wear footwear which will prevent slipping and tripping. Avoid slippery soles and wear well-fitting, correctly fastened footwear. Special non-slip footwear is available for special work situations. Consult your supervisor about the right kind of footwear for your situation.
- ◆ Work areas and traffic routes must be well-lit. Report or replace burned out light fixtures. Do not store materials where they will block the light from windows or lighting systems. Keep windows and light fixtures clean.
- ◆ Stick to established traffic routes. Falls can be caused by taking short-cuts through areas which contain unexpected obstacles.
- ◆ Use the handrail on stairways. Never run up or down stairs. Do not store any objects on the stairs and do not permit others to do so.
- ◆ Report any walking surface hazards such as obstacles, loose carpet, tile or stair treads.
- ◆ Never use makeshift climbing devices. Get a step stool or ladder, and use it properly, if you must reach a higher surface. Don't stand on chairs!



Slips, trips, and falls are far too commonplace. They can cause serious injuries or death - so take fall prevention seriously.

