



## **Safety & Risk Office 5-Minute Safety Talk No. 2 – Slip/Trip/Fall Prevention**

*Note to Supervisor: This 5-Minute Safety Talk (in some places, it might be called a Toolbox Talk or a Tailgate Talk) is designed not only to communicate important safety information to your employees, but also to be given to them by you, which will hopefully reinforce the message and let them know your expectations for safety. You can use the text below as a script to be rendered verbatim or just as talking points to be stated in your own words. Please also complete the attendance listing on the last page and send it to Safety & Risk, Mail Stop 66.*

There are various ways to experience a fall while working or walking around the campus. You can slip on something and lose your balance; you can trip over an object left in a walkway; or you can fall from an elevated position such as a ladder or stairs. Slips, trips and falls account for almost 50% of the injuries experienced by students, faculty and staff at the College, more than any other cause. In a worst-case scenario, a ground-level fall can result in a significant injury or even death.

To prevent a possible fall, concentrate on where you are walking -- inattention leaves you vulnerable to unsafe conditions.

Make sure you can see where you are walking. Do not carry loads that you cannot see over.

Keep walking and working areas well lit, especially at night.

Be on the lookout for foreign objects or substances on the floor that could cause you to slip and fall. Watch for deposits of water, food, grease, oil or debris—even a small amount or object can be enough.

Wearing the wrong shoes can make you susceptible to a slip/trip/fall. Wear shoes with non-slip soles. Avoid wearing flip-flops.

When entering a building from the outdoors, thoroughly clean the soles of your footwear. Walk-off mats have been placed at each entrance to permit you to remove moisture or debris that may be clinging to your shoes, especially during rainy weather. Don't walk too fast or take long strides when stepping from the walk-off mat onto the floor. The soles of your shoes may still be damp enough to cause you to slip. Walk with caution and avoid changing direction too sharply.

Be aware of tripping hazards, such as trash, unused materials, electrical cords and any other object left in an aisle or other designated pedestrian traffic path. If maintenance work necessitates leaving equipment or materials in a walkway, make sure the area has warning signs or is barricaded to alert pedestrians.

If you find equipment or material left in a walkway, report it. If it is maintenance equipment and supplies, let the proper personnel remove it. Help keep passageways clear of trash or trip hazards. If you toss something at a trash container and miss it, or if someone else has left something lying on the floor, by all means, **pick it up**.

Walk in designated aisle ways. Taking a short cut through a work area invites an accident.

Hold on to handrails when using stairs. They are there to protect you should you slip. Do not skip steps or run up stairs. If you're carrying a bulky or heavy load which hampers your ability to climb stairs safely, use the elevator or get help!

The worst falls are from elevated positions like ladders. They can result in serious injury or death. Learn and practice ladder safety. To wit, with regard to ladders:

- Ladders must be the proper height (stepladders) or length (straight ladders).
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of a stepladder or the top three rungs of a straight ladder.
- A straight ladder should extend at least three feet, or three rungs, above the landing it is being used to access.
- Position the straight ladder at the proper angle for climbing -- one foot away from the wall for every four feet of height.
- When climbing or descending, always face the ladder and maintain three points of contact with it—two hands and a foot or two feet and a hand.
- Never climb a ladder with anything in your hands. Use a tool belt to carry tools up. Climb to the desired height and then hoist any other tools or materials up with a rope.
- Once you're at the desired working height, never over-reach. Keep your body and legs within the ladder side rails—follow the Belt Buckle Rule! Extend only your arms beyond the side rails, and keep your belt buckle within them.

In summary, to prevent falls:

- Pay attention to where you are walking—be on the lookout for slip-and-trip conditions.
- Hold on to hand rails when using the stairs.
- Wear the proper footwear.
- Practice good housekeeping. Pick up trash and clutter and put things away after using them.
- If you see an unsafe condition that could result in a slip/trip/fall for someone, e.g., water on the floor or an electrical cord stretched across a walkway, either try to correct it or report it to someone who can.

Slips, trips and falls can occur every day. Their occurrence and the extent of any resulting injuries can be eliminated or minimized through knowledge and application of safe work practices. Lessons learned the hard way may have a permanent effect—serious injury or death. **Don't learn your lessons the hard way; practice safety.**

## 5-Minute Safety Talk No. 2 – Slip/Trip/Fall Prevention Attendance List

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

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**Send to the Safety & Risk Office, Mail Stop # 66, when completed.**