

SLIPS & FALLS



BACKGROUND NOTES

Over 3,000 people are injured every year in Nova Scotia as a result of slips, trips and falls in the workplace. Use this Rod Stickman video to lead a discussion about how to spot hazards and prevent these incidents and injuries in your workplace.

There are two basic types of falls: elevated falls and same-level falls. Same-level falls are most frequent, but elevated falls result in more severe injuries. A large percentage of elevated falls occur from ladders, but there are also a significant number of falls from vehicles and equipment, loading docks, buildings and other structures.

Many workplace slips and falls happen on and around slippery surfaces. In the video we see Rod slip on wet floors, and trip on lumpy carpets and objects in the hallways. Keeping workspaces clean and tidy can help prevent slips, trips and falls! Rod also falls down the stairs while carrying things that obscure his vision, and then takes a tumble because of poor lighting!

As you watch this video, think of ways you can work with your employees to create a workplace environment that eliminates the risks of slips, trips and falls. You may wish to encourage them to discuss incidents or near misses, what could have been done to prevent them, and what's being done now to prevent reoccurrences.

More information about preventing falls can also be found on Rod Stickman's "Working From Heights" video.

QUESTION & DISCUSSION POINTS

What kinds of things could make someone slip, trip or fall in our workplace? Examples:

- Spills on floors
- Slippery work areas
- Clutter
- Stairs or other uneven surfaces
- List group's examples

How can we prevent slips and falls in our workplace?

Examples:

- Clean all spills immediately; mop or sweep debris from floors
- Tell someone immediately if you see a hazard in the workplace
- Mark slippery work areas with clear and proper signage
- Use non-slip flooring or mats
- Remove obstacles from walkways and always keep them free of clutter
- Ensure power cords are secure and/or out of the way
- Provide proper lighting for work areas
- Don't carry objects that impede sight lines
- Use appropriate, non-slip footwear
- Make everyone responsible for tidiness of his/her own workspace
- List group's examples

What are some of the areas in our workplace that present with a risk for falls? Examples:

- Trucks, trailers, truck beds
- Wet, icy, muddy, oily, slippery steps
- Slippery work areas
- Worn, heavy-traffic surfaces
- Ramps, loading docks
- List group's examples

How can we prevent someone from falling in these areas? Examples:

- Keep steps clean and dry
- Install portable railings
- Erect safety signs around hazardous areas and tell your supervisor so he/she can get to the root of the problem.
- List group's examples

CONCLUSION

- Slips, trips and falls are a major cause of workplace injuries in Nova Scotia.
- Elevated falls, from ladders, vehicles, loading docks and stairs, often cause serious injuries.
- Removing obstacles and keeping a workplace neat and tidy can prevent many workplace trips and falls.
- Good lighting and proper carrying technique can help avoid a fall.
- Everyone has a responsibility to keep their personal workspace tidy.
- Communication is often the key to preventing these types of injuries. Make your voice heard.
- If you see a hazard in your workplace, be sure to report it to your supervisor – all hazards must be investigated.

Rod is a great way to begin the conversation about workplace safety. But he's just the start to a safer workplace. If you see a hazard in your workplace, be sure to report it to your supervisor – all hazards must be investigated.

WCB of Nova Scotia: 1-800-870-3331

NS OHS Division: 1-800-952-2687 or 1-902-424-5400

To learn more, visit worksafeforlife.ca and someways.ca

