



Winter Walking Hazards – One Safe Step at a Time

One of the most common injuries in the workplace today are slip, trip and fall injuries. As winter approaches, walking conditions will be affected when the temperature hovers above and below freezing. Ice and snow may build up, then melt and refreeze, changing normally clear wet walkways to icy ones. The risks of slip, trip and fall injuries only increase in these type of icy and snowy conditions, so extra caution should be taken in cold weather. (By Jody Warner, Cambridge Loss Control Supervisor)

2003 Dates To Remember:

January:

Plan Your Safety Training Now!
Call Jody For Training Ideas!
312-381-8208

February:

9-15, National Child Passenger Safety Week

March:

16-20 Poison Prevention Week
Workplace Eye Safety Month
Save Your Vision Month

April:

Sports Eye Safety Month
6-12 Intl Building Safe Week
7-11 Workzone Aware. Week
21-25 Window Safety Week
21-25 Playground Safety Week

May:

Clean Air Month
Melanoma Awareness Month
Electrical Safety Month
17-23 Safe Boating Week
18-24 National EMS Week
19-26 Buckle Up America Week

June:

NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

July:

Eye Injury Prevention Month

August:

Prepare Your Winter Safety Training!

September:

5-12 National Safety Council Congress & Expo – Chicago, IL
21-27 Farm Safety/Health Week

October:

5-11 Nat. Fire Prevention Week
20-24 School Bus Safety Week
20-24 Radon Action Week

November:

Take advantage of the weather and do your classroom training!

December:

"3D Month" - Nation Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month

When preparing to begin the workday, ensure that everyone is aware of the day's weather forecast, especially if inclement weather is expected. During cold weather conditions, pay special attention to the following:

1. Ensure that non-slip footwear is available and/or required.
2. Review the uses and drawbacks of different types of footwear for icy and snowy conditions
3. Before each shift, review the potential for slips, trips and falls, along with the importance of correct methods for walking in snowy and icy conditions, including:
 - Use small steps.
 - Use handrails when available, such as on stairs, ladders, and walkways.
 - Walk with a smooth motion.
 - Stretch often to improve flexibility and reduce the stiffness during cold weather.
 - Always stay aware and alert. If possible, avoid doing other tasks while walking.
 - When work requires you to do activities while walking, make sure you frequently scan your path for obstructions or hazards.
 - Always look forward. Never walk backwards.
 - Establish sure footing with each step. When moving through an area, choose the path that is most level and stable.
 - Walking-related injuries often occur when people are rushing or taking shortcuts. Take sufficient time to perform job tasks safely.
4. Make sure that walking surfaces are cleared of ice or snow. Walkways that "ice up" should be sanded or treated with other de-icers. If the area is simply too slippery to walk/work safely, it should be shut down until the area can be cleared or conditions improve.
5. Also make sure that walkways are cleared of obstacles and debris, which can pose additional hazards under ice and snow.
6. Review correct methods for getting on and off equipment and larger vehicles. There is potential for injury at any time, but the risk increases during bad weather. "Three-point contact" is extremely important. It is also important to inspect foot- and hand-holds for icy or slick conditions.
7. Recognize that snowy conditions, combined with heavy winter apparel, can limit your ability to see and hear. Take extra precautions to be aware of the work environment and to avoid slip, trip and fall hazards.

Plan Your Winter Safety Training -



Winter Clothing

During cold weather, warm clothing is not only comfortable, it's necessary. The body must be kept warm to work correctly. Muscles and mental capacity can both become sluggish when blood flow slows down. Eventually hypothermia sets in as the body core cools and begins to shut down.

However, wearing winter clothing can bring its own set of concerns. Clothing such as hooded jackets and parkas, hats with ear coverings, heavy coats and pants can restrict movement. Our sight, hearing and agility can also be affected while wearing winter clothing. It is important to be aware of the limitations introduced by the clothing and to make allowances. Increase your margin for safety whenever you can. (By Jody Warner, Cambridge Loss Control Supervisor)

OSHA - Ergonomic Update -

In April 2002, Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao unveiled a comprehensive approach to dramatically reduce and prevent ergonomic injuries in the workplace. OSHA developed a *Four-Pronged Ergonomics Strategy* to meet this goal through a combination of industry-specific and task-specific guidelines, outreach, enforcement, and research. Highlights are summarized below.

Guidelines

- OSHA's first ergonomic guidelines were released on March 13, 2003, and covered the **nursing home industry**. Since then, OSHA has drafted ergonomic guidelines for **retail grocery stores, the poultry industry and shipyards**.
- OSHA is also working with the **American Furniture Manufacturers Association**, the **printing industry associations** and the **Society of the Plastics Industry, Inc.,**

Enforcement

- OSHA has issued and settled four General Duty Clause citations for ergonomic hazards with more cases under evaluation for citation.
- OSHA announced a National Emphasis Program (NEP) for the nursing home industry in July 2002 that focuses on ergonomic hazards;
- OSHA has conducted 156 ergonomics inspections in industries other than nursing homes.
- A cross-cutting OSHA ergonomics response team evaluates and screens all inspection cases prior to issuing a citation.
- OSHA sent 88 hazard alert letters to notify employers of ergonomic problems in their facilities.
- Fourteen Regional Emphasis Programs and three Local Emphasis Programs are underway across the country, focusing on ergonomic hazards in the **meatpacking, hospital, auto parts, and warehousing industries**.
- OSHA named ergonomic coordinators for each of its 10 regional offices to assist employers and employees, with ergonomic issues.
- Ergonomists were hired in OSHA Regions 5 and 2. Other regions are hiring ergonomists to provide expertise in OSHA enforcement cases.

Outreach and Assistance

- OSHA has Ergo alliances including the **American Meat Institute**, the **Independent Electrical Contractors** and the **Airline Industry**.
- OSHA's affiliated Education Centers conducted 29 classes on ergonomics in 2002 and have 47 classes scheduled in 2003.
- OSHA redesigned its ergonomics Web page to reflect its four-pronged strategy to reduce ergonomic injuries.
- OSHA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce jointly developed a web cast on the willingness and ability of businesses to adopt and implement ergonomics policies.
- OSHA awarded more than \$1.6 million in Susan Harwood Training Program Grants to organizations addressing ergonomic issues in FY 2002.
- OSHA's Assistant Secretary John Henshaw made more than 75 appearances on safety and health issues, including ergonomics, over the past year.

- OSHA is revising its best practices video on nursing homes. The video examines patient handling issues and features the use of mechanical lifts.
- OSHA is in the final review stages of several e-Tools, including Computer Workstations and Product Inventory.
- OSHA produced a Web cast and set of fact sheets to accompany the release of the Nursing Home Ergonomics Guidelines.

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National Advisory Committee on Ergonomics

- OSHA established a 15-member National Advisory Committee on Ergonomics (NACE), with representatives from industry, academia, labor, and the legal and medical professions. More than 250 people were nominated in response to a Federal Register announcement seeking nominations to NACE.
- The first NACE meeting took place in January 2003. Discussion centered on task-specific guidelines, research needs and efforts, and outreach and assistance methods to communicate the value of ergonomics.
- The second NACE meeting was held in May 2003. The committee established working groups to provide in-depth analysis and recommendations to the full committee.
- Based upon a recommendation of the research discussion group, NACE recommends that OSHA sponsor a symposium for published researchers on work-related musculoskeletal disorders to examine their studies and the methodologies used.

Watch Your Vision

Vision may also be a concern in winter. Vision can be affected by glare off the snow, as well as frost on lenses. Make sure your tinted safety glasses are in good order. Also be aware of sudden and intense light changes.



Safety Resource Center

Helpful Websites:

Products – cpsc.gov

SafeUSA – safeusa.org

OSHA - www.osha.gov

Home Safety Tip:

Add a table spoon of vegetable oil to boiling water when cooking pasta to help prevent boil-overs and possible scalding burns!