

Wintertime slips and falls

Introduction

No matter how often snow and ice is salted and removed from walking surfaces, you will probably encounter some slippery surfaces this winter. Walking to and from parking lots, on sidewalks and between buildings during the winter months requires special attention to avoid slipping and falling. We often forget how dangerous slipping and falling can be.

Hazards to watch for

- Snow-covered ice
- Black ice
- Uneven surfaces
- Unsalted sidewalks and parking lots

Here's what you do

- Report unsafe areas and unsalted parking lots and sidewalks to the appropriate personnel immediately.
- Wear shoes or boots that provide traction on snow and ice. Avoid boots or shoes with smooth soles and heels.
- When getting in and out of vehicles use the vehicle for support.
- Walk in designated walkways as much as possible. Taking shortcuts over snow piles and other frozen areas is dangerous.
- Look ahead when you walk; a snow- or ice-covered sidewalk may require travel along its grassy edge for traction.
- Focus completely on getting from point A to point B safely.

■ Do the "Penguin shuffle"

Walking like a penguin can reduce your chances of slipping and falling.

Here's how:

- Focus on your footing
- Keep your head up
- Slowly take short steps or shuffle
- Extend your arms out to your sides for balance and walk flatfooted
- If you fall, try to avoid landing on your knees, wrists, or spine; relax your muscles and fall on your side.

In conclusion

Slipping and falling on ice can cause serious injuries that may require months to recover. By following the simple steps we discussed you can reduce your chances of slipping and falling.

Let's discuss what can be done at our workplace to avoid winter slips and falls.

