

## Staying Safe from Slips, Trips, and Falls This Winter

As winter approaches, the risk of slips, trips, and falls increases significantly. Snow, ice, and wet surfaces are major contributors to workplace accidents this time of year. Here are some practical tips to keep yourself and your colleagues safe.

### The Risks Are Real

Slips, trips, and falls are some of the leading causes of workplace injuries, particularly in winter. These incidents can lead to sprains, fractures, and even serious head injuries. By staying vigilant and following simple precautions, we can all help reduce these risks.

### Preventing Slips and Trips

- Wear slip-resistant footwear.
- Clear snow and ice from walkways; use salt or sand for traction.
- Mark hazardous areas with warning signs.
- Move cautiously, especially when surfaces appear wet or icy.

### Preventing Falls in the Workplace

1. Keep Work Areas Tidy
  - Avoid clutter in walkways and staircases.
  - Secure cords, rugs, and any objects that could cause tripping.
2. Inspect and Maintain Equipment
  - Check ladders for stability and damage before use.
  - Use fall protection equipment when working at heights.
3. Light It Up
  - Ensure all work areas are well-lit, especially entryways and outdoor paths.
  - Replace burned-out bulbs promptly.



### General Winter Safety Tips

1. Dressing for Conditions
  - Wear layers to retain warmth, including moisture-wicking undergarments.
  - Use insulated, waterproof boots with good traction.
  - Ensure gloves, hats, and face coverings are appropriate for the conditions.
2. Maintain Visibility
  - Wear high-visibility clothing if working near traffic or machinery.
  - Use appropriate lighting in low-visibility conditions (fog, snowstorms, or short daylight hours).

### Further Winter Working Actions

1. Dealing with Cold Stress
  - Recognize signs of hypothermia (shivering, confusion, slurred speech) and frostbite (numbness, discoloration).
  - Take regular breaks in warm areas.
  - Stay hydrated, avoiding alcohol or caffeine, which can dehydrate.
2. Safe Use of Tools and Equipment
  - Inspect tools for ice buildup that might impede function.
  - Use equipment designed for cold weather.
  - Avoid overexertion, particularly when shovelling snow or lifting heavy objects.
3. Driving and Vehicle Safety
  - Keep vehicles maintained (tyres, antifreeze, windshield wipers).
  - Carry emergency supplies: blankets, torches, extra food, and water.
  - Drive slowly and allow extra space for braking on slippery roads.
4. Emergency Preparedness
  - Have an emergency action plan in place.
  - Train workers on cold weather hazards and response procedures.
  - Stock first aid kits with supplies for cold-related injuries.