



Snow & Ice Safety

Snow and ice storms often include dangerous sheets of ice and banks of snow, transforming parking lots, steps and sidewalks into precarious situations for employees to navigate. Choosing the right type of footwear to address these scenarios can dramatically reduce the chance of a slip and fall injury.

According to OSHA, slips, trips and falls constitute the majority of workplace accidents, causing many types of debilitating injuries and time away from work. They're also responsible for 15% of all accidental deaths, second only to motor vehicles as a cause of fatalities.

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1-800-258-2667

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Major contributing factors causing slip and falls include:

- Improper footwear for winter walking conditions.
- Inadequate removal of snow and salt.
- Walking or running too fast for conditions.
- Lack of handrails.
- Poor walking surface conditions.
- Carrying laptops or other materials.
- Poor lighting or visibility.

When walking over snow and ice, remember to:

- Choose the right type of footwear.
- Look for slip hazards and scan the path of travel.
- Maintain a focus on the slip and fall exposures.
- Take shorter, slower steps, keeping the feet shoulder-width apart.

Specialized Footwear for Unique Industries

Slip and fall injuries are more common in certain types of industries because of the exposures presented. As such, specific types of footwear and pull-on treads are now available for employees working in the healthcare, transportation, schools and manufacturing sectors. The soles of the footwear used in these industries are designed with unique materials to maximize traction, or coefficient of friction, for the working conditions of the job and work environment.

Written Footwear/Foot Protection Programs

In an effort to reduce the cost of slip and fall injuries, many companies have developed written footwear or foot protection policies to provide guidelines for employees in the selection and use of footwear made specific for their industry and job duties. A variety of sample programs are available listed below.

Mobile Shoe Vendors

When considering a shoe program, explore using the services of a mobile shoe vendor. These companies will identify the types of shoes compatible with your work environment and offer products with the best degree of slip resistance for the job. Mobile vendors stock a selection of shoes and will visit your company to quickly size and fit employees inside their mobile warehouse.



Traveling on Business

Employees traveling on business or working off-site are often subjected to precarious walking conditions when they reach their final destinations. Therefore, it's important to choose the proper type of footwear.

- Consider wearing a shoe cover or snow boot and changing into dress shoes at the customer location.
- Avoid wearing high heels outdoors.
- Select a parking area close to your customer's facility and choose a spot where snow removal and salting has been completed.
- When exiting a vehicle, hold on to the door securely when checking the surface for slippery areas.
- Walk slowly, taking shorter steps to maintain balance.
- Choose the best path of travel by scanning the area in front of you.
- Avoid cutting through landscaping and using makeshift paths.
- Use a cart to pull a laptop case and materials. This will lower your center of gravity and provide improved balance.

Footwear and Shoe Vendors

- WinterWalking.com
- ShoesForCrews.com
- Sorel.com
- Yaktrax.com

Sample Footwear Programs

- ShoesForCrews.com
- SRMax.com

OSHA Standards on Foot Protection

- OSHA.gov

Mobile Shoe Van Service Companies

- SafeShoes.com/shoemobile.asp
- RedWingSafety.com/content/hasslefree-us

Suggestions for Reducing Slip and Fall Injuries at the Workplace

- Create a slip and fall campaign for your company.*
- Have periodic safety contests that create employee awareness.*
- Implement a footwear/foot protection program.
- Regularly inspect and maintain parking lots, sidewalks and entrances.
- Promptly remove snow and ice in parking lots and walkways.
- Apply salt or other surface treatments as needed and maintain salt supplies at entrances.
- Develop procedures for monitoring weather conditions and alerting employees.
- Create awareness using orange safety cones, signs, window clings, posters, etc.

*Refer to our "Create Your Own Campaign" guidelines for more information.

