|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ABC COMPANY – Occupational Health and Safety Program** | | |
| **Fall Prevention – Slips, Trips and Falls** | | Issue date: DD/MM/YYYY  Review date: DD/MM/YYYY |
| Approved by: | Reviewed by: | |

Please note the following document is a sample. Review carefully and modify this document to meet the needs and requirements of your organization.

# 1.0 PURPOSE

**ABC Company** is committed to protecting workers from falls, whether they are caused by slips, trips and falls or fall from heights. This procedure will address slips, trips, and falls; which can result in injuries with lasting effects and even death. It is important to understand how slips, trips and falls happen, how to identify hazards and how to eliminate or minimize the hazards.

# 2.0 DEFINITIONS

**Slips:** Occur when there is a loss of footing due to incomplete contact between foot and ground, or loss of traction between foot and walking surface. Slips can be caused by:

* Slippery surfaces (frost, snow, ice, spills, waxed floor, mud, wet surfaces)
* Unanchored mats
* Poor lighting
* Personal factors of workers
* Environmental factors
* Improper footwear

**Trips:** Occur when walking is interrupted by an obstruction or accidental error in stride. Trips can be caused by:

* Uneven surfaces (wrinkled rugs or carpets, uneven ground, slopes, stairs and steps)
* Objects in the way (materials, tools or clutter, uncovered cables, hoses and wires, low drawers left open, narrow or short steps)
* Obstructions blocking line of vision
* Poor lighting
* Personal factors of workers
* Environmental factors
* Improper footwear

**Falls**: Happen when a loss of balance, usually from a slip or trip, results in the body impacting the ground or floor. There are two major types of fall accidents – falls to same level (i.e., a worker falls to the same level they were standing on) and falls from height (i.e., a worker falls from an elevation to the level below).

# 3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

**Employer:**

* Identify roles and responsibilities for all workplace parties
* Perform risk assessments to identify hazards that can lead to slips, trips, and falls; inform workers and supervisors of them
* Investigate all incidents and near misses and track and trend incidents to identify areas of concern regarding slips, trips, and falls
* Develop SWP in fall prevention
* Provide training to workers in precautions to take to prevent slips, trips, and falls
* Add slip, trip and fall risk factors to workplace inspection checklists
* Ensure controls are put in place as soon as possible, or temporary measures, if there is a delay in the implementation of the control.

**Supervisor:**

* Identify and correct slip, trip, and fall hazards
* Advise workers of slip, trip and fall hazards
* Enforce SWP in fall prevention
* Conduct instruction and training sessions on slips, trips, and falls
* Ensure work area is free of clutter and walking surfaces are in good condition
* Ensure compliance with footwear policy
* Implement “quick” clean centres: convenient locations for paper towels, absorbent materials to clean small spills

**OHS Committee, WHS Representative or Designate:**

* Promote education and awareness of all company fall prevention policies and procedures
* Consult with workers and the employer on any fall prevention concerns
* Lead by example by following safe work practices and procedures
* Make recommendations and follow-up to ensure that corrective actions are effective

**Worker:**

* Following safe work practices and procedures
* Adhering to recommended housekeeping practice
* Wearing appropriate footwear for the task
* Identifying and reporting hazards and/or fixing unsafe conditions immediately
* Participating in education and training sessions to prevent slips trips and falls

**Contractors and Visitors:**

* Following safe work practices and procedures
* Adhering to recommended housekeeping practice
* Wearing appropriate footwear for the task
* Identifying and reporting hazards

# 4.0 PROCEDURE

**ABC Company** will conduct hazard assessment(s) that identify where workers are at risk of slips, trips or falls and put appropriate controls in place. When looking for slips, trips and fall hazards, ensure to look at the interaction of people, equipment, materials, environment as they all contribute to incidents. Performing ongoing hazard assessments, workplace inspections and incident investigations are all methods to identify these hazards.

Some examples may include:

* Slippery surfaces (frost, snow, ice, spills, waxed floor, mud, wet surfaces)
* Unanchored mats
* Poor lighting
* Improper footwear
* Poor house keeping in walkways
* Uneven surfaces (curbs, ruts, elevation changes)

Once the hazards are identified, and risk to workers is evaluated, solutions or controls are put in place. The hierarchy of controls is used to identify the best solution to control the risk of a hazard once it has been recognized.

First attempt to remove or eliminate the hazard, and when this is not reasonably practicable, incorporate other controls to reduce risk to workers. When identifying way to control slip, trip and fall hazards consider the following hierarchy of controls.

## 4.1 Elimination

Physically remove the hazard. Some examples include:

* Removing a crack in a walkway
* Removing ice or snow
* Removing uneven surfaces
* Installing more power outlets to eliminate cords crossing walkway
* Installing slip-resistant flooring (i.e. abrasive floors or mats)
* Storing items at arm’s height
* Installing sufficient lighting
* Providing temporary flooring

## 4.2 Substitution

Replace the hazard. For example:

* Replacing slippery flooring with slip-resistant surface

## 4.3 Engineering Controls

The installation or modification of equipment that physically controls the hazard. Workers are isolated or separated from the hazard. Some examples include:

* Applying floor treatments to increase slip resistance
* Ensuring stairs and railings meet the requirements of the NL OHS Regulations
  + Section 67 (good state and repaired), 459 (Exits and Doors), 460 (handrails), 377 (temporary floor), 458 (Access and Egress), etc.
* Provide sufficient levels of internal and external lighting, including stair wells, corridors, walkways, etc. Use a flashlight when walking into a dark room.
* Perform regular inspections and maintenance on equipment that uses liquid or fluids as part of the operation or process.
* Contain and drain liquids as close as possible to the source of the liquid; use floor grates and ensure they are slip resistant; use trays to collect liquid and waste.
* Use proper ventilation techniques to prevent a build-up of steam, condensation and grease on floors.

## 4.4 Administrative Controls

Administrative controls change the way that workers do their work. Some examples include:

* Displaying warning strips and signs to alert pedestrians about changed or uneven surfaces.
* Planning pedestrian routes to avoid wet and slippery areas.
* Developing safe work practices or procedures
* Preventative maintenance program – to ensure equipment and machinery are working properly.
* Education and training to workers

## 4.5 PPE

Protecting workers with personal protective equipment. For example:

* Proper footwear (section 80 of regulations) requires worker’s footwear to be appropriate to working conditions that includes slippery and uneven terrain.

# 5.0 COMMUNICATIUON

Communication is also an important part of preventing slip, trip and fall hazards. Whether it be the communication of the organization's strategies for prevention, the lessons learned from slip, trip and fall incident investigations, hazard reports received, or the outcomes of inspections.

While the topics for communication can vary, so too can the means of communication. Whatever the chosen method is, it should always provide an opportunity for discussion, questions and feedback. Safety moments, newsletters, emails, posters, and intranet reminders are some practical ways that you can share information in the workplace. Whatever you use, make sure it’s appropriate to the workers and make sure it’s one of many ways to communicate information. For example, if workers do not have access to a computer, emails are not a good way to share information.

It’s important to remember that communication does not replace education and training.