



EH&S
FACT SHEET
May 2005

Stairways:

Recommendations:

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Slips, Trips & Falls

In 2004, nearly 20% of the workplace injuries at USC occurred when people suffered a slip, trip or fall. By discussing precautions with your workgroup, many of these injuries can be prevented.

Behaviors that can lead to slips, trips and falls are: distractions; not watching where one is going; carrying materials which obstruct view; wearing sunglasses in low-light areas; and failure to use handrails. These and other behaviors, caused by lack of knowledge, impatience, or bad habits developed from past experiences, can lead to falls.

Adequate lighting should be provided for stairwells, with sturdy handrails on both sides. Persons using the stairwell should have one hand free to be able to use the handrail.

Everyone must make a commitment to prevent accidental slips, trips and falls. All incidents, with or without injury, should be investigated and corrective action taken to prevent a repeat occurrence.

- When designing a work area or requesting flooring, insist on slip resistant materials especially in entryways. Doorway mats can be helpful, but must be maintained to prevent bent corners or displacement creating an obstruction.
- Regular frequent inspections of your work areas should be conducted to identify hazards which could cause slips, trips and falls. Special attention should be given to the walking surfaces, housekeeping, lighting, vision, and stairways. Immediate corrective action should be taken.
- Special attention should be given to proper walking, carrying, climbing and descending stairways. Safe practices should be discussed and reinforced with your workgroup.
- All workers should wear proper footwear for their work and environment whether in the office, shop, laboratory, or classroom.

Use the EH&S Fact Sheets to facilitate safety discussions in your work area. Post the monthly topic on your bulletin board.