



Safety Source

CONTENTS

Stay Alert—Avoid Slips, Trips, and Falls	1
Safety Contest	1
From the President	2
Firefighter Injury Cause	2
Ways to Prevent Trip Hazards	2
3 Point Rule-Avoid Falls	2
Safety is Part of our Core Values & Mission	3
Safety By Everyone	3
National Facts	3
Winter Slip Prevention	4
Sr. Vice President Message	4
New Coins	4

Slips, Trips, and Falls

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Stay Alert—Avoid Slips, Trips, And Falls

Overview

Slips and falls occur every day. The extent of injuries and their recurrence can be minimized through proper safety knowledge and attitudes. Practice safety—don't learn it through experience. There are various ways to suffer slips and falls while working. You can slip and lose your balance, you can trip over objects left in your walkway, or you can simply fall from an elevated position above the ground.



Slips

Slips can be caused by wet surfaces, spills, or weather hazards like ice and snow. Slips are more likely to occur when you hurry or run, wear the wrong kind of shoes, or don't pay attention to where you're walking. To avoid slips, be on the lookout for foreign substances on the floors. Watch for deposits of water, food, grease, oil, sawdust, soap, or debris. Even small quantities are enough to make you fall. When entering a building from the outdoors or from debris areas, clean your footwear thoroughly. Snowy and rainy weather requires that you clean off the soles of your shoes. Don't go too fast, walk safely, and avoid changing directions too sharply.

Trips

Trips occur whenever your foot hits an object and you are moving with enough

momentum to be thrown off balance. Trash, unused materials, any object left in the aisles or other areas designed for pedestrian traffic invites falls. Extension cords, tools, carts, and other items should be removed or properly barricaded off. Report any equipment or supplies that are left in walkways. Keep passageways clear of debris. Walk where you're supposed to walk. Short cuts through areas invite accidents. Concentrate on where you're going—horseplay and inattention leaves you vulnerable to unsafe conditions.

Falls

The worst falls are from elevated positions like ladders. They result in serious injuries and death. Learn and practice ladder safety and the proper use of scaffolding. Hold on to handrails when using stairs or ramps. They are there to protect you should a fall occur. If you're carrying a heavy load which hampers your ability to properly ascent or descend stairs, use the elevator, or find help! When climbing, use a ladder of proper length that is in good condition. Keep it placed on a firm surface. Do not climb a ladder placed on machinery, crates, stock or boxes. Keep the ladder's base 1 foot away from the wall for every 4 feet of height. Don't over-reach. Always have control of your balance when working from a ladder. Never climb a ladder with your hands full, and always carry tools in proper carrying devices.

Safety Contest

Starting in October 2020, Pro-Tec Fire Services implemented the first bi-annual Health and Safety contest.

Each Fire Station was asked to create an activity that helps to reinforce the themes of Slips, Trips, and Falls utilizing their staff, the airport, the public or anyone or thing they wish to involve.

We received 100% participation with some really great videos, posters, power points, and games. They were informative, creative, funny, and educational. Everyone did a great job!

Ultimately, Corporate had to decide on only one for the contest winner. The winner of the 1st Health and Safety contest was **Calgary B shift!**

Congratulations

Click on the picture to view the winning PSA.



Click here to view all safety contest submissions.



Message from the President



Of our four core values, safety is Number One. Everyone goes home. No one gets hurt. Of all our accomplishments, I take the greatest pride in that this organization (YOU/WE) have lived this out to the fullest.

Let me share a couple accomplishments: In the past three years, we have suffered two lost days due to injury and without making excuses, the incident was beyond our control. Our work comp (WC) mod is .62 which translates to a 38% discount off of list WC rates. Our outside Loss Control Consultant said this mod for the Fire Service is “fantastic”. Saskatoon has never had an injury and we commenced service there in 2004.

More importantly, we all have people we love and whom love us. It is just best for all that we go home in one piece all the time.

Safety is a state of mind. It is a constant awareness of your environment and its potential hazards. So my request, strong suggestion, instruction and order is to continue to “Stay Safe”!

Here is wishing all of you a Safe and Joyous Holiday Season.

- Carl Thiem



Firefighter Injury Cause

By: Ardmore Airpark Fire Dept.

It's been said numerous times before, “firefighting is a dangerous occupation”. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that approximately 80,000 injuries occur annually to firefighters. Data analysis further tells us that approximately 12% of firefighter injuries are caused by slipping and another 10% by falling.

To help manage this issue, remember that slips, trips, and falls:

- Are often the result of poor footing caused by slippery or uneven surfaces, or substances on the floor.
- Require stressing good housekeeping at the station and being aware on call responses.
- Require maintenance of handrails, slide poles, slides, and floor surfaces in general at the station.
- Requires firefighters to be aware of the situation and the potential for a slip, trip or fall hazard.

While our mission as fire and rescue personnel is to save lives and property, if we are not physically able to do the job, we cannot fulfill our mission.

Ways to Prevent Trip Hazards

By: Chicago Rockford Fire Department

- Make sure lighting inside and outside your facility is adequate and have maintenance check routinely for burned out bulbs and other lighting problems.
- Design work areas to allow plenty of room for employees to move around safely.
- Keep flooring and stair treats in good condition.
- Conduct regular inspections to check for trip hazards.
- Not leaving boxes, bags, tools, or other material on the floor.
- Not laying cords or power cables across walkways.
- Not leaving any items on stairs.
- Keeping work areas neat and tidy and putting tools and materials away after use.
- Picking up items from the floor, even if you didn't put them there.
- Stepping around obstructions, not on or over them.
- Walking slowly, making sure you can see where you're going, especially when carrying a load.
- Watching for changes in floor level—such as a few steps or ramp up or down.
- Not leaving boxes, bags, tools, or other materials on the floor.



Three Point Rule: Avoid Falls

Falling while getting into or out of the ARFF truck cabs or when mounting or dismounting truck bodies or trailers can cause serious injuries. Many knee, ankle and back injuries result from jumping from equipment onto uneven ground or objects.

The biggest cause of falls from a vehicle is human error and failure to follow the “Three Point Rule”. The Three Point Rule requires three of four points of contact to be maintained with the vehicle at all times—two hands and one foot, or both feet and one hand. This system allows maximum stability and support, reducing the likelihood of slipping and falling.

There are important steps that can be taken to prevent mounting/dismounting injuries with the use of the Three Point Rule being most important.

- Evaluate every truck and piece of equipment.
- Provide additional steps, non-slip surfaces and hand holds where necessary.
- Maintain steps, contact surfaces and handholds in usable condition. Inspect frequently.
- Instruct all workers in safely mounting and dismounting equipment, using the 3-point contact method.
- Install warning decals or signs in the cab or on the door of trucks reminding workers to use 3-point contact.



What the employee can do:

- Keep steps, ladders and standing surfaces free of snow, mud, and debris. Report damage immediately.
- Don't use tires or wheel hubs as a step.
- Don't use the doorframe or door edge as a handhold.
- Wear footwear with good support and slip resistance.
- Don't climb down with something in your hand. Leave it on the vehicle floor and retrieve it after getting safely on the ground.
- Don't rush to climb out after a long shift.
- Descent slowly to avoid straining a muscle.
- Be extra careful when working in inclement weather.
- Exit and enter facing the cab.
- Get a firm grip on rails or handles.
- Never jump! You may land on an uneven surface, off balance or on something.
- Look before exiting.

Safety is Part of our Core Values and Mission Statement

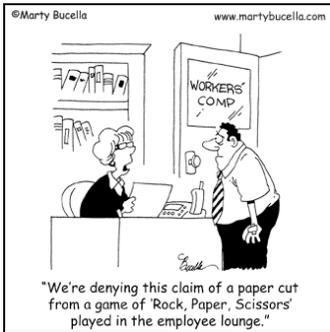
By: Karen Cashman, HR Director

Why is safety such a big part of our company culture?

First and foremost, it's the right thing to do for our employees. It is who we are. Our statement "**Everyone goes home. No one gets hurt.**" is the backbone to our day-to-day business.

Second, it's just good business practice. By reducing on-duty injuries, we have not only created a safety-minded culture, we have also achieved financial benefits that are good for our customers and our employees.

Since 2017, we have had four reported claims with only two resulting in medical expenses paid in excess of \$1,000 and both claims had minimal loss time/restricted duty.



For policy years 2015 and 2016 we had **NO** reported workers compensation claims. This is an outstanding achievement, particularly given the services we provide!

Let's talk about loss ratio and Mod rates.....

What is a loss ratio percentage, and what does that number mean? Loss ratio percentage is calculated by taking the premiums paid in for the policy year and compares it to the paid medical claims and loss time for reportable accidents or injuries. We are compared to and rated against other industry-standard (Firefighters) and a number less than 20 is considered very good.

Pro-Tec currently has a loss ratio percentage of **5.5%** which is excellent. This number is not easily attained without continued education, hard work, and daily reminders to be safe. A lot of a firefighter's daily activity is repetitive in nature, and most of the claims reported are slips, trips, and falls.

A low loss ratio is extremely important as it is one component an Underwriter considers when setting premium rates. This equates to lower premium rates, which are savings we can use to remain competitive in our market.

Another component considered by Underwriters is our MOD rate.

Our current MOD rate is at **.65** for 2020 policy year. Just as with the loss ratio, a lower MOD rate is better. A MOD rate of **1.0** is a *normalized statistical average* based on our class code (Firefighting). Therefore, a **.65** is a *fantastic number* and it directly compares us to the MOD rates of the other private firefighting organizations (our competitors). In fact, many industries require companies to provide their MOD rate before being awarded specific contracts. If that rate is too high, companies risk not being awarded contracts.

We believe that sometimes it is important for you to understand the why behind our initiatives. While it may just seem like it's the right thing to do – which it is – being safety-minded is also sound business practice. We encourage you to please continue to be diligent in keeping safety in mind while on shift. We will continue to run safety campaigns and contests and look forward to your participation.

Daily safety briefings, initiatives, and awareness all contribute to keeping accidents and reported injuries down.

Keep up the great work!

Safety By Everyone

By: Trent Lott Airport Fire Department

Safety is everyone's responsibility, from the Fire Chief all the way down to the entry level firefighter. Do not just walk by an unsafe situation and do nothing, thinking it's someone else's responsibility. Correct it, if you can do so safely, and if not, make sure it is reported immediately.

But safety expands just beyond slips, trips, and falls. We also have to be aware of our health safety.

- ▶ Wash your hands
- ▶ Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet
- ▶ If you're sick, stay home



National Facts

Traumatic Occupational Injuries

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Sept. 11, 2020

- 27% of the 900,380 nonfatal work injuries resulting in days away from work in 2018 were related to slips, trips, and falls
- 235,740 injuries due to contact with objects and equipment in 2018 were so severe that they resulted in time away from work
- In 2018, 1,276 U.S. workers died in work-related crashes involving motor vehicles (24% of all deaths)
- Workers less than 25 years of age have higher rates of occupational injuries treated in emergency departments than any other age group
- An estimated 2.5 million workers sustained work-related injuries and were treated in emergency departments during 2018
- In 2018, the rate of emergency department-treated, work-related injuries was estimated at 160 per 10,000 full-time equivalent workers
- Male worker accounted for approximately 65% of the work-related injuries treated in emergency departments
- The three leading causes of work-related injuries treated in an emergency department were contact with objects and equipment, overexertion and bodily reaction, and falls, slips and trips without a fall

Winter Slip Prevention

As you race through the door seconds before the shift begins, your foot slips in the puddle of slush melting inside the entrance. Flat on your back, you wonder how this happened. A small patch of ice on the stairs, a puddle on the floor, or snow on the sidewalk can put you down.

Use extra caution to keep on your feet this winter.

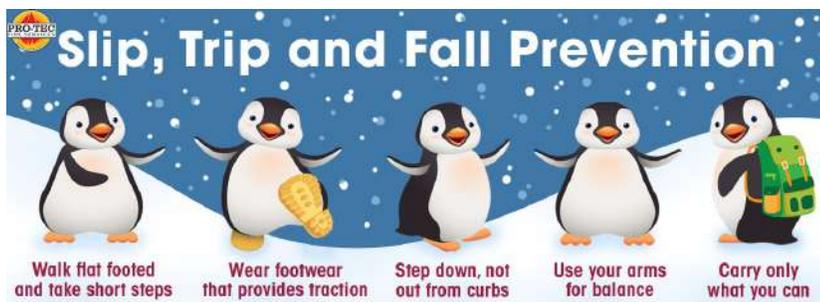


- Don't hurry when conditions are likely to be slippery. Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination.
- Wear slip-resistant footwear, appropriate for the weather. Leather-soled shoes for men and high-heeled shoes for women are especially hazardous in winter.
- Practice good housekeeping habits. Clean up small spills immediately. Mark bigger ones with a warning sign while you gather cleaning materials.
- Keep skid-resistant door mats near entrances to dry your footwear. Check the bottom of your feet every time you

enter a building, and clean off the accumulated ice and snow.

- Anticipate hazards as you are walking. When you come to a corner, slow down. If you think a surface might be slippery, take short sure steps instead of long strides.
- Make sure you can see over the top of parcels you are carrying while you walk. Try to keep one hand free to use handrails on stairways.
- When getting in and out of vehicles, always keep at least one hand on the handle or grab bar so you can catch yourself if you start to slip.
- Try to avoid climbing ladders in cold weather. The rungs could be covered with clear ice. If you must climb a ladder, examine it carefully and proceed with caution.
- Keep pathways at work and home clear of snow and ice. If possible, turn on extra lights at night to illuminate the area.
- Pay particular attention when you are walking after dark. Remember that drivers will have a difficult time seeing you, so be sure to wear light colored clothing and watch out for vehicles.

Sometimes, even through you have tried to be careful, you will fall. Don't move until you are certain you haven't severely injured yourself or broken any bones.



NEW COINS

Check out the new Pro-Tec Coins!



The new Pro-Tec coins are awarded to employees for going above and beyond the call of duty, all while keeping safety their number one mission.



Sr. Vice President's Message

Reflections on Safety

The world our business operates in is inherently unsafe. Put the current pandemic aside, and just think for a moment about what we are exposed to from a safety perspective on a daily basis. It's not just the major impacts from emergency responses such as exposure to heat, flames, chemicals, bodily fluids, etc., it's the everyday repetitive nature of what we do. Stepping on and off apparatus, donning and doffing gear, lifting and turning, checking out tools and equipment, cleaning and washing, training. Each of these things, when you break them down into their simplest steps, can pose any number of hazards or safety concerns. Now take that and multiply it by the number of sites and the number of personnel we have, and you can almost come to see our risk exposure as a company.

As leaders of this organization, it is our job to ensure that the company is profitable, but more importantly, that our employees are safe so they can go back to their friends and family at the end of their shift. It is why safety is our primary core value. It is why, we always emphasize safety in what we do. It is one of the very few, if not only, things we do not compromise on. And, it is why we have elected to hold these Safety Competitions twice a year. If reinforcing our safety policies can prevent one injury, just one accident, it's worth all of the stress and worry created by participating in the contest. As Karen mentions in her article, not only is it sound business practice, but it's the right thing to do.

We really enjoyed seeing the results of the efforts everyone put in to the first competition. Our hats off to Calgary as the inaugural winners. We can't wait to see what the next competition has to offer!

Afterall, I think I can safely say, a little friendly competition is well worth reinforcing that we want everyone to be able to enjoy the holidays with their loved ones.

-Bill Hershman

