

STAY SAFE FROM THE WINTER SLIP & FALL

It lurks around many a corner, on stairs, down drives, and walkways. It does not discriminate, taking down men and women of all ages and occupations. And it doesn't care about an individual's physical ability. Feeding on snow and ice, its tendrils spread to entangle the unwary, putting them flat on their back. What is this terrible scourge? The winter slip and fall.

According to the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics, slip and falls are the third leading cause of workplace injuries and our recent winter weather has only served to increase the tally. Even though slip and falls are frequent, they don't have to be an inevitable result of winter weather.

Generally, a lack of awareness (of slippery or icy conditions) and behavior, are the leading contributors to slips and falls, and the best prevention fits into four areas that can be recalled with the acronym SAFE:

- ▶ **SURFACE** – Maintain the surface for the weather and anticipated foot traffic. Be sure the area is lit properly and that snow removal equipment and sand or salt are readily available.

- ▶ **ATTENTION** – Slow down, don't be in a hurry. Practice walking safely: shorten your stride and keep a larger portion of your footwear sole in contact with the surface during each step.

- ▶ **FOOTWEAR** – Wear proper footwear for the anticipated conditions. Wear boots to work and change at the office. Get traction enhancers like Stabil-Icers or YakTrax to slip over shoes.



- ▶ **ENVIRONMENT** – When the weather is inclement and temperatures are dropping below freezing, slow the pace of work to allow for better situational and hazard awareness. Look for low spots or high-traffic areas – where ice can build up – especially when the ground is covered with that initial, light “dusting” of snow.

Keep SAFE-ty in mind, to stay on your feet this winter, and avoid the winter slip and fall.