

MBAA Safety Tool Box Talk



Slips, Trips and Falls

OVERVIEW

Breweries are inherently slippery with smooth surfaces and wet floors. According to OSHA, 15% of all accidental deaths are contributed to Slips, Trips and Falls (STFs), second only to motor vehicle accidents as a cause to fatalities in general industry. STFs are also the second most common cause of lost-workday injuries in general industry. These injuries can result in back injuries, strains, sprains, and severe head injuries.

CAUSES OF SLIPS, TRIPS, FALLS

Slips happen when there is not enough grip between footwear and the walking surface. This lack of traction often occurs when substances such as water, oil, grease or dust are on flooring. Trips happen when people lose their balance after their feet collide with an object.

RISK FACTORS

The following risk factors have caused slips, and trips and same-level falls:

1. Spills on walking surfaces may cause slippery surfaces
2. Loose mats or rugs may result in trips
3. Boxes and containers may obstruct vision
4. Poor lighting affects visibility
5. Walking surfaces in need of repair, such as loose concrete or holes causing changes in floor height
6. Work organization factors, i.e. working at a fast pace and feeling rushed may risk injury
7. Individual factors such as age (affecting balance) and employee fatigue

STANDARDS AND CASE STUDIES

OSHA 29CFR 1910.22 (a)1 requires all places of employment, passageways, storerooms and service rooms must be

kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.

Several case studies have been documented by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation in regards to STFs. For example, an employee was removing stacks of cardboard from a pallet. As he picked up the cardboard, he stepped back and tripped over a pallet jack behind him. He fell backwards landing on his wrist, resulting in a fracture and missed work.

Another case cited an auto detailer whose employee slipped outdoors on ice and fell on his head, suffering brain injury.

RISK CONTROL MEASURES

The risk of STF's can be reduced in many ways with minimal effort.

HOUSEKEEPING

On a regular basis, ensure all walking and working areas are free of slips and trip hazards. Some suggested actions:

- Remove any clutter or obstacles as soon as they are identified in pathways and aisles, such as hoses and cords
- Clean spills and debris promptly
- Run hoses to avoid obstruction

HAZARD AWARENESS EDUCATION

Slips, trips and fall hazard awareness should be included in worker safety training. Encourage workers to follow these practices:

1. Take action on slip trip hazards - clean up spills immediately. If the hazard can't be cleaned promptly, mark with cones or barriers to avoid the area.
2. Wear appropriate footwear – use well fitted, non-slip shoes or boots and make sure the treads are in good condition.

3. Follow safe work procedures and develop good habits -
 - a. Don't carry or move more than you can safely handle
 - b. Make sure you can see where you are going when carrying large items
 - c. Use carts and dollies when possible
 - d. Avoid distractions such as the use of cellphones while walking
 - e. Avoid taking shortcuts and instead use designated pathways

FOCUSING ON PREVENTION

Injuries from slips, trips and falls rank second in all injuries with direct costs of to employers of \$10.17B (Source: Liberty Mutual 2016 Work Safety Index). Focusing on preventing slips, trips and falls is one of the easiest and most effective ways to reduce workers comp costs, serious injuries, and even possible fatalities.

LINKS

[Checklist for Slip, Trips and Falls](#)
[NIOSH Preventing Slip, Trips and Falls](#)

Please refer to the links below or ask the MBAA Brewery Safety Committee for additional information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
BREWERY SAFETY PROGRAMS,
PLEASE VISIT THE MBAA SAFETY
WEBSITE AT:
www.mbaa.com/brewresources