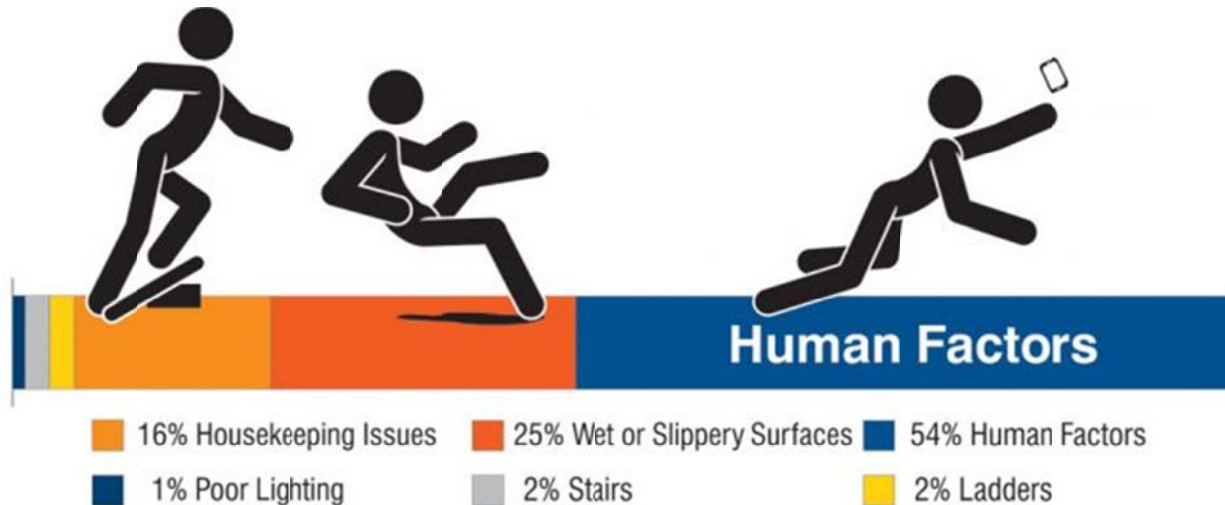


## Tailgate Topic Review

[PP 03/03/2019 - 03/16/2019]

### Heavy feet & Sore backs

## 3 Big Causes of Slips, Trips and Falls



A 2014 [survey of 1,294 safety professionals](#) revealed the most frequent factors in slip, trip and fall incidents at their workplaces—and a whopping 95% of respondents cited one of three causes.

The main characteristic the three biggest causes have in common is they're the result of the errors or errors in judgement that people make every day, like how tidy to keep their work area, whether to report a wet surface, how fast to walk and whether to move blindly around corners. People tend to perceive these causes (and especially human factors) as being a lot less risky than they actually are, which makes it challenging to find effective and permanent solutions.

Because these factors require constant attention, they can be avoided entirely (or made worse) by employees' mental states throughout the day.

### One Step at a Time

Most safety programs focus on the physical hazards of slips, trips and falls. This should always be your first priority, but you can't

#### Everyone is at Risk

No matter your industry, gender, age or job, you're at risk of slips, trips and falls. Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for people ages 25+ and account for more than 26% of injury-related visits to the emergency department.\*

\*National Safety Council Injury Facts®  
2014 Edition

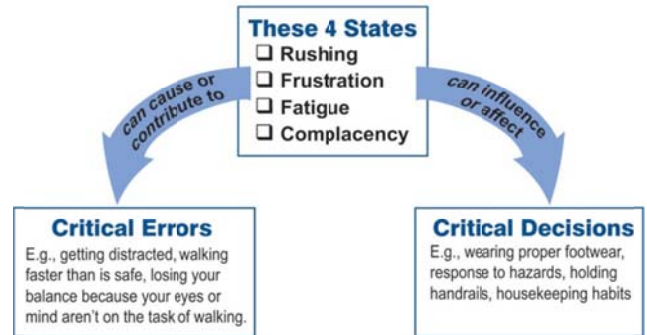
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eliminate slips, trips and falls by only dealing with physical factors.

The truth is that many slips, trips and falls are caused or made worse by a person's state of mind. When we're rushing, frustrated, tired or complacent we tend to make errors and decisions that increase the chance of injury.

Nobody chooses to slip and fall. But no matter how effective the rest of your safety program is, your employees have a higher risk of being injured due to a slip, trip or fall when they're in one of these four states.

If you've done everything you can to minimize physical hazards, your next step is clear: you need to address human factors.



## The Danger of Human Error

As you can see, the four states are dangerous and can lead to distraction—and safety folks know that increases the risk of injury. Almost 88% of safety professionals believe that not paying attention while walking significantly increases the risk of slipping, tripping and falling when a hazard is present, and 99.5% say it increases the risk to some degree.

The presence of tripping hazards is not enough to cause an incident on its own. It also requires employees to take their eyes and mind off the task at hand. And when that happens hazards and human factors quickly add up to injury-causing falls.

## The Role of Inattention in Slipping and Tripping Incidents



Just because there's a hazard doesn't mean workers will fall—and just because there's a sign doesn't mean they're safe. Fortunately, human factors training have been proven to increase personal safety skills and risk awareness—and that can lead to a lot fewer injuries.

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## 10 WAYS TO REDUCE SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS IN YOUR BUSINESS

Slips, trips and falls are the leading cause of general workplace accidents and injuries ranging from minor bruises to severe traumas such as head injuries, broken bones, sprains and lacerations. In fact, slips, trips and falls are often reported as the most common causes of workers' compensation claims.

Here are ten ways you can prevent slips, trips and falls around the workplace:

### 1. Keep walking surfaces clean and free of clutter

By keeping walkways clear, you can quickly reduce the potential for injury. An unobstructed path minimizes the opportunity for an employee to trip over an unexpected object and reduces the potential for a spill that could create a dangerous slipping hazard.

### 2. Lighting

Proper lighting inside and outside of the workplace can help illuminate areas that may be common places for employees or customers to trip or fall. More often than not, steps or other hazards can be hidden by darkness or shadows. By installing proper lighting (such as spotlights or illuminated steps), you can reduce the chance that an individual will slip or fall.

FALLS ACCOUNT FOR  
**25%** OF ALL CLAIMS  
REPORTED EVERY YEAR.



MORE THAN  
**17%** OF ALL  
**DISABLING**  
WORK-RELATED INJURIES  
RESULT FROM FALLS.

FALLS CAUSE  
**15%** OF ALL ACCIDENTAL DEATHS,  
WITH **12,000 FATAL INCIDENTS**  
A YEAR.

### 3. Signage

Using clear, well-placed signage can help call attention to potential problem areas. A sign indicating a step, gap, uneven ground or loose rocks will call attention to the hazard and increase awareness and attentiveness. Using reflective tape can also highlight problem areas.

### 4. Stairways/Handrails

Do your stairways have handrails? Is the top and bottom stair marked with reflective tape? Have you removed any unsecured rugs or carpets from the stairs or landings? Stairs are a common area for falls in the workplace and additional care is often required to reduce the risk of injury. Be sure to keep your stairwells clear, well lit and free from unsecured objects.

### 5. Footwear

Are your employees wearing footwear that is appropriate for the specific work conditions that they're working in? Shoes with proper traction should be required when possible.

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## 6. Step stools

Providing ladders and accessible step stools can help reduce the chances of a fall by helping employees reach heights safely. By ensuring supportive options are present, there is less of a chance that an employee (or customer) will decide to rely on unstable chairs, desks or tables.

## 7. Manage cords

Power, internet and phone cords can often create a sea of obstacles for employees and customers. Try to run cables behind walls or under carpets to keep them hidden. Install power outlets, internet connections and phone jacks in easily-accessible locations to avoid running cables across walkways.

THE SECOND MOST COMMON CAUSE OF SCI IS

**FALLS**

(with motor vehicle accidents being the first)



FALLS ACCOUNTED FOR **28.5%** OF ALL SPINAL CORD INJURIES SINCE 2010

## 8. Check floor condition, inside and out

Make sure there are no cracks or holes in building flooring or in the pavement outside. Repair any problem areas immediately and be sure to place warning signs in/on/around areas that need to be fixed.



## 9. Non-skid throw rugs on slippery surfaces

Do you have tiled or hard wood floors in splash-prone areas (e.g. bathrooms)? Adding non-skid throw rugs can help reduce accident potential. Rugs are an easy solution on otherwise slippery surfaces, but just make sure to add non-skid padding underneath the rug to prevent it from slipping out from underneath someone.

## 10. Clean up spills immediately

If you have a spill, clean it up immediately. If allowed to penetrate the floor surface, some substances can actually create a more slippery surface even after cleanup. When a spill occurs, immediately place warning signs around the hazard and then tackle the cleanup process.

While slips, trips, and falls can often be attributed to carelessness or clumsiness, the good news is that most accidents are preventable. It is critical to frequently survey your work environment to avoid potential issues. Proactive attention to hazards will ultimately help keep your employees and customers safe and out of harms way.