

# Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

## Steps to Keep You on Your Feet

**Do you know how many people die each year as a result of falling?**

- a) 4,000 or less
- b) between 4,000 and 8,000
- c) more than 12,000

The answer is c. More than 12,000 people die each year from falling, either on or off the job. Even something as minor as a small coffee spill or a frayed carpet can cause a bad fall. Being aware of situations that could cause a fall is the best way to keep people on their feet. For example, if you see an oily spot, don't just wipe it up; find out where the oil came from and think about how to prevent another spill. Is something broken or leaking? Will drain-through mats help? Preventing slips, trips and falls can be as simple as good housekeeping, common sense and thinking ahead.

### Good Housekeeping

- ◆ Keep work areas free of clutter.
- ◆ Keep equipment in its proper place.
- ◆ Keep walkways and aisles clear.
- ◆ Wipe up spills immediately.
- ◆ Discard trash.



### Common Sense

- ◆ Make sure your pathway is clear.
- ◆ Avoid walking on wet floors.
- ◆ Avoid running in the workplace.
- ◆ Avoid lifting or carrying more than you can handle.
- ◆ Wear nonslip rubber-soled shoes.
- ◆ Report dangerous conditions so they can be fixed.

### Thinking Ahead

- ◆ Are there electrical cords in hazardous places?
- ◆ Is carpeting torn or loose?
- ◆ Is there an uneven surface?
- ◆ Is there enough light?

### Look Out Below

If you find yourself heading for a fall, remember to roll, not reach. By letting your body crumple and roll, you're less likely to get injured. Reaching out to break your fall may cause you to break an arm or a leg. If you fall, slip or trip, report it immediately, even if it's minor.

### Fall Prevention Checklist

- ✓ Close drawers and cabinets after every use.
- ✓ Avoid bending, twisting and leaning backward while seated.
- ✓ Always use a stepladder for overhead reaching.
- ✓ Report loose carpeting or damaged flooring.
- ✓ Never carry anything that keeps you from seeing where you're going.
- ✓ Use handrails on stairs.

