

# Stay safe: slips, trips and falls

**By safely disposing of your liquid waste, you are helping to protect the natural environment. But it's important to protect yourself and others too.**

Slips and trips are the most common cause of injury at work<sup>1</sup>. On average, they cause 40% of all reported major injuries and can also lead to other types of serious accidents such as falls from height.

As well as poor workplace design, the most common factors that cause these types of accidents are poor workplace practices and procedures, and inappropriate human behaviour.

More specific causes of slips, trips and falls include:

- Obstructions on the floor
- Uneven surfaces and potholes
- Weather conditions resulting in wet and slippery walkways
- Lack of signposting and barricading
- Poor and inadequate lighting
- Misuse of equipment
- Inappropriate footwear
- Failing to follow the correct manual handling procedures

Good housekeeping practices are essential for the prevention of slips, trips and falls, and underpin many of the control measures that should be implemented to reduce these kinds of accidents.

By following basic safety principles accidents and injuries can be dramatically reduced.

<sup>1</sup> [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### Practical steps to prevent slips, trips and falls include:

- Protect flooring - check for loose, damaged and worn flooring, fix leaks, maintain plant and equipment, and install signage to protect against contaminated areas.
- Clean safely - use appropriate cleaning materials, remove spillages promptly, and exclude pedestrians until the floor is dry.
- Protect your environment - keep walkways and work areas clear of obstructions, and make sure lighting is sufficient.
- Get the right footwear – consider slip-resistant footwear for wet areas and ensure appropriate safety equipment is worn.

### Three-point rule:

Climbing into and out of mobile vehicles such as forklifts or trucks present a common exposure to slips and falls.

The three-point rule is a simple and effective way to minimise these risks.

The technique requires three or four points of contact to be maintained with the vehicle at all times – **two hands and one foot, or both feet and one hand** until you are either in your seat or standing firmly on the ground.

This system allows maximum stability and support, reducing the likelihood of slipping and falling.

