



## PREVENTION OF SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

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**SCOPE:** *This document represents industry guidance and considered pertinent after consultation within the membership and incorporating HSE guidance. It is intended to assist member companies to identify the causes of slips, trips and falls and offers guidance on measures that can be taken to prevent them from occurring.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Slip and trip accidents are responsible for 11,000 major injuries a year, making them the most common injury to employees at work. The HSE states that on average, slips and trips are responsible for 40% of all reported major injuries<sup>1</sup> and 29% of over 7 day injuries<sup>2</sup>, with an estimated 1.2 million working days lost annually<sup>3</sup>. The initial cause of a wide range of other types of accident, such as fall from heights, can also be attributed to slips and trips. The total cost to employers is over £500 million every year and the human costs of such accidents ruin quality of life, and cause pain and suffering and therefore incalculable<sup>4</sup>.

This document aims to provide some guidance on prevention of slips, trips and falls.

### 2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the health and safety of all employees and visitors to their sites. This includes taking measures to control slips, trips and fall risks. Employees must not endanger themselves or others and must use any safety equipment provided. Manufacturers have a duty to ensure that their products are safe and provide information about appropriate use.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risks for all work activities. This is designed to ensure that potential slipping and tripping hazards are identified and obliges the employer to introduce effective measures to safeguard the health and safety of personnel on site.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require employers to ensure that all workplace floors are suitable, in good conditions and free from any obstructions. People must be able to move around safely.

#### Case Law Link

[http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/markup.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2007/685.html&query=title+\(+ellis+\)&method=boolean](http://www.bailii.org/cgi-bin/markup.cgi?doc=/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2007/685.html&query=title+(+ellis+)&method=boolean)

### 3. CAUSES OF SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS IN THE MALTING INDUSTRY

The causes of slips, trips and falls within the malting industry can be divided into 5 main categories:

1. Design of Plant
  - Access and egress
  - Inappropriate surfaces

- Cost
2. Hygiene
    - Wet slippery floors in process areas
    - Build-up of slime in wet process areas and on process machinery such as turners
    - Grain spillages
    - Oil and grease spillages
    - Dust accumulations in barley storage areas
  3. House Keeping
    - Trailing cables and water hoses in process areas
    - Debris left in walkways after maintenance or cleaning tasks
    - Trailing wires and handbags in offices
    - Poor storage of files etc
  4. Maintenance
    - Uneven, worn or damaged walkways and handrails
    - Inadequate lighting
    - Condition of stairs
    - Absence of step grips or edge paint on stairs
  5. Human Factors
    - Inappropriate footwear
    - Lack of concentration
    - Rushing due to stress and pressure of work
    - Taking short cuts away from designated walkways
    - Poor manual handling practices- not being able to see the floor
    - Lack of training, awareness and supervision
    - Being unfamiliar with the site
    - Weather conditions
    - Not following Safe Systems of work
    - Apathy
    - Not reporting hazards
    - Walking past spillages
    - Leaving Waste

#### 4. GUIDELINES TO PREVENT SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

- **Design of Plant**
  - a) Access to and egress from stairs, walkways and platforms should be designed to be safe with adequate handrails.
  - b) Walkways should be constructed of a non-slip material, such as open grating.
  - c) Safety gates or chains to be installed, if applicable.
  - d) Lighting should be suitable and sufficient.
  - e) Emergency lighting must be provided in any area where persons at work are exposed to danger in the event of lighting failure.
  - f) Suitable floor surface material should be chosen for wet and dry process areas.
  - g) Pedestrians and traffic routes should be properly planned so as to avoid dangers.
  - h) Consideration should be given to the position of site services such as power points and water taps so that when work takes place it is not necessary for cables and hoses to cross walkways or stairs.

- i) Eliminate working at height wherever possible/practical.
  - j) When access is required to upper levels in maltings, staircases are the preferred option over CAT ladders.
- **Hygiene**
    - a) Cleaning schedules for all process areas should be established, implemented and maintained and records kept.
    - b) Hygiene standards in all process areas should be monitored on a regular basis.
    - c) Spillages of grain should be swept up as soon as possible.
    - d) Spillages of oils and greases should be cleaned up immediately with spill absorbent and disposed of as controlled waste.
    - e) Dust levels in dry areas should be monitored to ensure that excessive levels are not allowed to accumulate on equipment, ledges and in the atmosphere.
    - f) Dust extraction equipment should be regularly maintained and records held.
- **House Keeping**
    - a) Risk Assessments, Safe Systems of Work and Work Instructions should include reference to tidying the work area on completion of tasks and storing equipment in the correct location.
    - b) All sites should put in place adequate arrangements to ensure the correct storage or disposal of engineering parts.
    - c) A designated, signed engineering storage area should be established for the lay down of surplus items.
    - d) Staff should receive training to ensure the importance of good housekeeping is fully understood.
    - e) Regular assessment of housekeeping standards in process areas and offices should be carried out.
- **Maintenance**
    - a) A Planned, preventative maintenance programme should be in place, including checks of all pedestrian routes.
    - b) Regular checks of lighting and emergency lighting must be carried out.
    - c) Hazards should be reported in a Hazard Register by any member of staff for immediate attention by Maintenance.
    - d) Regular site safety inspections should be carried out and include assessment of the condition of walkways, stairs, platforms and external pathways.
    - e) Edge grip of paint on stairs should be regularly renewed.
- **Human factors**
    - a) Appropriate non-slip footwear must be provided for all staff; this must be worn by staff at all times and replaced as necessary.
    - b) All work tasks should have a Risk Assessment, a Safe System of Work and Work Instructions.
    - c) Staff should receive health and safety training including:
      - Following Safe Systems of Work
      - Manual handling training
      - An understanding of the primary causes of slips, trips and falls and how to avoid them
      - The importance of not walking past spillages
      - Hazard reporting
      - The legal duties of the employee under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
      - Waste disposal

- d) There should be an easy method of hazard reporting e.g. a Hazard Register kept in an easily accessible location
- e) Management supervision and example should support and reinforce good working practices at all times.
- f) Staff awareness of the risks of slips, trips and falls should be raised by the imaginative use of notice boards.
- g) Contractors and temporary staff should be closely supervised to ensure the prevention of slips, trips and falls.

## 5. MANAGING THE RISKS OF SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

A good management system will help to identify any problem areas, resolve the issues in these areas and review to check that the measures taken have been effective. The following should form part of an effective management system.<sup>5</sup>

### Planning

- Encourage employees to assist in the identification of areas that are a slipping and tripping risk.
- Once key risk areas have been identified set goals for improvement.
- Selecting materials, equipment and work practices to suit the working environment can reduce slip and trip hazards from liquids, powders and objects. An example of this is using anti-slip flooring in areas that cannot be kept dry.
- With careful planning, slip and trip risks can be removed or minimised.

### Organisation

- Involve employees in the process of reducing risks.
- Divide responsibility between employees to ensure that all areas of the workplace are kept safe.
- Make sure that details are clear and available as to who is responsible for which areas- include cleaning and other contractors.

### Control

- Check working practices and processes to ensure that they are being carried out correctly. An example is checking that housekeeping is of a good standard.
- Keep records of cleaning and maintenance work.
- Encourage good health and safety practices.

### Monitor and Review

- Accident investigation and inspection reports can be used to show any improvements and to identify deficiencies in the management system.
- Utilise safety representatives to help identify and solve problems.
- Invite employees to review the effectiveness of current control measures put in place to reduce the risks of slipping and tripping.

## 6. FURTHER INFO

The following HSE e-learning tool & publications may provide further advice.

- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/step/index.htm>
- *Preventing slips and trips at work: A brief guide*  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf>

- Slips and Trips: Hazard spotting checklist  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck4.pdf>
- *Getting to grips with slips and trips*  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/downloads/gettingtogrips.pdf>

## 7. REFERENCES

1. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf>
2. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overall/hssh1819.pdf>
3. <https://app.croneri.co.uk/feature-articles/british-safety-council-guide-preventing-slips-and-trips?product=134%27>
4. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/costs.htm>
5. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf>