

Walking Safety

There is a tendency to overlook hazards in familiar work settings, which can lead to having an accident. Be aware of walking and working surfaces - Slips, trips and falls are best avoided with good housekeeping:

- Keep walkways clear of debris and tools (welding leads, extension cords, etc.)
- Clean spills immediately
- Make it clear that others are expected to do the same

Slip, trip, or fall hazards on some jobs, such as working on the derrick, on the rig floor, or on raised decks can be deadly. The phrase “slip, trip, and fall” may initially seem redundant, but these are three distinct types of safety hazards. All three hazards can result in injury and equipment or property damage.

Slip hazards are created when liquids, ice, or other materials interfere with the traction between the floor and a person’s feet. Injuries from slips can include broken bones, back injuries, and bruises.

Trip hazards usually involve an inappropriately placed object, such as an electrical cord, storage box, pipe, or tool. People that trip over something can either fall to the ground or into another object. They can still suffer broken bones and bruises even when they catch themselves. Equipment and tools can also be broken.

Falls can be life threatening. Each year there are many fatal incidents in the industry, and numerous workers are injured. A wide range of protections are available, including guardrails, fall arrest systems, safety nets, covers, and travel restriction systems.

Spotlight on Stairways:

A common cause of falls while ascending or descending stairs is “stair hopping.” Stairs should be ascended or descended one tread at a time and only while using the handrail. If you observe unsafe conditions on stairways, do not assume that someone else will report them. Inform your supervisor or maintenance personnel immediately so that a repair or clean up can be carried out as quickly as possible.

The concept of the handrail is basic.

If you slip, trip, or begin to fall while descending a staircase, grabbing the handrail can break your fall and save you from serious injury. Yet, most people neglect the use of it. Building codes for stairs and ramps are justifiably very rigorous because stairway accidents can cause severe injury and even death.

Good design can substantially reduce the potential for miss-stepping by providing us with the means to retrieve our balance, but even the best design cannot eliminate falling hazards entirely. The fact is that some incidents can be caused by inattention, unsafe behavior, and inappropriate footwear.

AVOID A FALL!
USE HANDRAILS



Precautions: Check the stairways: condition of the steps and landings, uneven stair heights, and obstacles and uneven surfaces around both sides of the door to stairway. Slip, trip, and fall protections can be as simple as using a flashlight to see where you are walking to elaborate harness systems for working on the derrick. As with any workplace hazard, a careful evaluation of the work area to assess the hazards is an important first precaution. Walk to the route you will be following when transporting materials. Look for uneven surfaces, trip hazards, objects you need to maneuver around, foot traffic, or any other obstacle. Pay attention before entering elevators: the floor of the elevator may not be even with the floor of the corridor.

Always be aware of your surroundings so that you can take the necessary care and attention. Workers operating machinery while texting or using their smartphones may injure themselves or others, which may lead to lost time from work. Employees more focused on their devices than another person as they pass in common corridors may not be as engaged in their immediate surroundings and might not see potential hazards.

Distracted walking is another common phenomenon. When distracted walking meets the workplace, employee health can suffer. Some common distractions include: talking on a phone, checking the time, reading, talking with a colleague. The use of cellphones while on the stairway can prove to be a distraction whether you are talking or texting. Checking your wristwatch or even your phone for time takes your eyes away from your footing.

While we all walk everyday, there can be serious injuries if we are not careful. Remember that walking requires your full attention.

