



AmTrust North America
An AmTrust Financial Company

Safety Zone

Winter Slips and Falls

Each winter, employees slip, fall and injure themselves. Many of these injuries can be prevented by preparing for seasonal conditions.

Prepare Parking Lots and Walkways

- Identify and post winter pathways into and out of buildings.
- Check drainage and remove obstructions. Melting and refreezing will create hazardous ice.
- Fill holes. These may become concealed under snow and fallen leaves.
- Remove gravel and other loose material. In addition to being a fall hazard, gravel can be thrown by snow removal equipment.
- Remove leaves from walkways. Even dry leaves can make a sidewalk slick.
- Identify sites where snow will be piled. Instruct maintenance staff and snow removal firms where to pile snow. Choose sites where melting and refreezing won't create hazardous ice.
- Check lighting in parking lots. With fewer daylight hours, employees may be arriving or leaving in the dark.
- Make sure vehicle standing and unloading zones are not in the path of pedestrian travel.
- Check the condition of handrails on outside steps. These are particularly important when steps become slippery.

Prepare for Snow Removal

- Check reserves of salt and sand. Don't be caught without supplies when the first snow falls.
- Check condition of snow shovels.
- Check condition of snow blowers and tractors. Perform maintenance such as oil changes. Start and run equipment to check its operation. Obtain fuel before the first expected snow. Keep fuel in approved safety cans in secured areas, preferably in an outbuilding or shed.
- Arrange for snow removal with a reliable company. Meet with the vendor in advance to schedule service and discuss procedures, especially snow pile location. Obtain a Certificate of Insurance from the vendor and asked to be named as an additional insured on the vendor's policy.

Removing Snow

- Sprinkle sand or salt on wet or icy surfaces.
- Re-salt surfaces as they refreeze. Ice can freeze over roughened surfaces, thereby rendering sand and other materials ineffective.

Prepare for Indoor Hazards

- Check the condition of indoor mats, rugs, and runners. Replace those with curled edges, holes or worn spots. Don't use carpet remnants; the edges curl and create tripping hazards.

- Check the condition of mops and buckets for cleaning up water tracked in from outdoors.
- Check the availability of “Wet Floor” signs to warn of hazardous conditions.
- Look into purchasing and applying liquid floor coatings containing particulate matter. Once dry, they create rough, slip resistant surfaces. Apply gritty, self-adhesive strips to floors and steps or apply heavier materials that will adhere to walking surfaces.

Prepare Employees for a Safe Winter

- Encourage employees to wear well fitting boots, rubber overshoes or shoes that are slip resistant on snow and ice. Low-heeled dress shoes and athletic shoes offer fair to good traction on dry surfaces, but typically offer very poor traction on snow and ice. Slip resistant winter footwear is safer and more appropriate to wear to and from work and while doing grounds maintenance and off-site activities.
- Most falls occur when you have both feet on the ground. To prevent falls: pick up, wipe up, look out and avoid horseplay. Post signs to remind employees, “Walk, don’t run.”
- Ask your employees for their suggestions in preventing winter slips and falls.

For additional information and resources on this topic and other safety and risk management subjects be sure to visit the Loss Control section on our website:

<https://www.amtrustgroup.com/small-business-insurance/claims/prevention>

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