



AmTrust North America
An AmTrust Financial Company

Safety Zone

Proactive Prevention of Slips and Falls - Grocery

The most common causes of customer injuries in Grocery operations are slips, trips, and falls. Customer incidents can result in lawsuits and bad publicity for a store. Injuries also increase operating costs. Paying claims, handling public relations, and higher insurance costs are just some of the fallout that managers must handle when customers are hurt. Slips and falls injure employees too.

Slips and falls have many causes. The most common cause of customer slip and falls is improper housekeeping. Correcting slippery floors will greatly reduce the number of injuries in the Grocery setting, from the front end of the store to the warehouse.

Reasons for slippery floors

- Water, grease, produce debris, dry goods, meat blood, or other liquids not cleaned up right away.
- The average person will not easily see some liquid spills because he or she is not looking down at the floor while shopping.
- A trail of water drops can run from flowers, produce, and the meat or deli section.
- Customers may drop produce, grapes, or other fruit throughout the store, not just in the produce department.
- Customers sometimes remove fresh corn leaves, which then fall to the ground.
- Milk, yogurt, and juice boxes can sweat or leak.
- Customers may drop and break containers.
- Rice, beans, nuts, and powders may fall from ripped containers.
- An employee who pulls instead of pushing carts or six-wheelers may not notice leaks or debris dripping behind a cart.
- An employee who cleans a spill may fail to dry it completely.

Keep a paper towel with you at all times. Watch for these housekeeping problems as you walk through the store, even if you are just going to another area or department.

- Always be on the lookout for housekeeping issues that need attention.
- Wipe up spills as soon as you see them. Do not wait for someone else to do it. It takes only a second for someone to fall!
- Watch for dropped fruits and vegetables such as grapes, apples, and produce leaves. Pick them up immediately.
- If a spill is larger, call for assistance and block off the area of the spill. Remove warning cones as soon as the area is dry so that customers do not begin to ignore cones.
- Be observant. Always report unsafe conditions you cannot manage yourself. Also report to a supervisor any unsafe conditions that tend to repeat themselves.

These housekeeping tips can prevent injuries in the back end of the operation and prep areas.

- Drying a small spill with a mop takes about 30 seconds. Even during busy periods, make time to keep floors free of all slip and fall hazards.
- Use teamwork. Communicate with each other to keep good housekeeping in the front of your mind throughout your shift.
- Report unstable merchandise displays and food cases if you cannot fix them yourself.
- Put away cleaning equipment promptly and safely. Mops, brooms, and other cleaning items left on the floor can cause serious injury.
- Inspect pallets for protruding nails. Remove the nails from pallets left in the traffic path.
- Do not leave flattened cardboard, plastic wrap, wires, straps, or other debris on the floor.

Remember, each store and its employees must maintain a safe and clean place to work and to shop. Clean spills and remove hazards before someone falls. Do not assume that someone else will clean a spill or remove a hazard. Do it yourself, even if it's not your assigned job. Block off the area and clean it, or call for assistance. Remain watchful and be ready to respond quickly to housekeeping issues.

Finally, remember to work as a team. Communicate with your coworkers and your supervisors to keep your work area running smoothly and to prevent injuries.

Are You In The Zone?

1. What are a few reasons for slips and falls?
2. Keep a paper towel _____.
3. Wipe up _____ as soon as you see them.
4. What are a few things you can do as you walk through the store?
5. List some unsafe items to look for in the back and prep areas.
6. If you find nails protruding from a pallet, what should you do?
7. Whose responsibility is it to maintain a safe and clean place to work and shop?

I have received information on proactive prevention of slips and falls.

Employee Name: _____ Date: _____

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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