



SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS POLICY

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Glossary

Term	Description

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1 PURPOSE

To ensure that slips, trips and falls are minimised on Badger premises.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Badger offices and sites.

3 REFERENCES

- EU Directive 89/654/EEC “Minimum Health & Safety Requirements for Workplaces”.
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations.

4 DEFINITIONS

- Good housekeeping – Keeping a place for everything and everything in its place.
- Workplace – Means the place intended to house workstations on the premises of the undertaking and/or establishment and any other place within the area of the undertaking and/or establishment to which the worker has access in the course of his/her employment.

5 GUIDANCE

The most common causes of these accidents are substances on the floor, followed by obstructions in traffic routes.

6 THE BENEFITS OF MANAGING SLIPS AND TRIPS

Preventing slips and trips risks is important because:

- Injuries are frequent.
- They are the most common cause of non-fatal major injuries.
- The potential losses could be significant to the viability of the business.
- Loss of key, trained personnel as well as the loss of wages, and the pain and suffering to the individual.
- Liability: legal costs in compensation cases increased insurance costs and enforcement action.

7 THE CAUSES OF SLIPS AND TRIPS

Slips account for most slips and trips injuries and the majority of these injuries occur because the floor is wet. Therefore where possible it is important to keep floor surfaces dry, wipe away spills and leaks; or if any liquid cannot be cleared immediately to segregate the area by using e.g. cones, a warning sign or similar. Slips can also occur on dry materials such as dust.

In some situations it is not possible to keep the floor dry in which case the floor surface will need to be sufficiently rough for grip and staff may need to wear suitable footwear e.g. a floor surface made up of large, sharp grains gives high surface roughness.

Trips are caused in the majority of cases by obstructions or by uneven surfaces. The simplest way to reduce the risk of tripping is to check and remove obstructions where possible or to highlight and warn where obstructions are fixed. Many major injuries arise from slips and trips on surfaces and structures such as floors, pavements, steps and stairs. Others are caused by trips over materials, cables, products, furniture and fittings. Human factors are also a major contributory cause in many of these accidents.

8 HSE REQUIREMENTS

When visiting workplaces, HSE inspectors expect to find a robust management system to identify slip and trip problems and to take action. They also look for a positive commitment to the issue, and a demonstration that slip and trip risks are taken seriously at all levels. Finally, they expect to find that workplaces have effective control, where reasonably practicable, of work activities and environmental factors likely to lead to slip and trip accidents.

Many effective preventative measures can be instituted without great expense such as:

- Raising awareness among employees and others e.g. notices
- Implementing proper procedures for routine cleaning of floors and cleaning up of spillages.
- Adequate lighting.
- Wearing of sensible footwear.

9 CLEANING

As noted above, the most common cause of accidents is the presence of substances on the floor which cause slips. Detailed procedures therefore need to be in place for identifying, reporting and cleaning up spillages as well as for carrying out routine cleaning of floors.

Procedures need to consider and protect against all the potential risks which can arise. For example, recently-mopped floors can be as slippery as significantly wet floors. It is, therefore, important to ensure that floors are given time to dry before people are allowed to walk on them or, at the very least, that warnings remain in place. Equally, however it is important to avoid over-polishing floor surfaces. In some areas where spillages are particularly likely it may be appropriate to provide safety floor surfaces in order to reduce the risks of slips and trips further.

10 REMOVING OBSTRUCTIONS

The next most common cause of accidents is the presence of obstructions on traffic routes, be these external pathways, internal corridors or other areas. Obvious practical measures will include procedures to identify and deal with removable trip hazards such as bags and boxes, and other hazards such as broken or damaged floor surfaces, and to have procedures in place to deal with problems such as snow or ice on external pathways.

Fixed hazards can be highlighted with different coloured paint or tape and / or the use of warning signage. Other steps, however, could include the provision of more storage facilities, which may reduce the likelihood of pedestrians tripping over boxes or other items obstructing their passage.

11 FOOTWEAR

Footwear plays an important role in preventing slip incidents. The footwear should be suitable for the working environment. In some situations specialised footwear may be necessary with an adequate grip.

12 LIGHTING

Adequate and appropriate lighting also plays an important role in preventing slips and trips. Poor lighting can obscure slip and trip hazards, while excessively bright or incorrectly placed lights can be equally hazardous.

13 MANAGING THE RISK FROM SLIPS AND TRIPS

Examples of slip hazards - spills and splashes of liquids and solids, wet floors, unsuitable footwear, loose mats on polished floors, inclement weather, change from a wet to a dry surface, unsuitable floor surface/covering, 'dusty floors', or sloping surfaces.

Example of trip hazards - loose flooring/floor covering, worn floor covering, holes, cracks, uneven outdoor surfaces, changes in surface level, trailing cables, or obstructions.

Increased risk may arise from hazards due to the following factors: poorly organised walkways, inadequate/unsuitable lighting, incorrect cleaning procedures, moving/handling a load, rushing around, or fatigue.

It is important that all floors and surfaces are checked on a regular basis and that all employees report any slip or trip hazards immediately to ensure that appropriate measures are taken.

Table 1 illustrates typical hazards and some suggested responses.

Table 1

Hazards	Suggested Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spillage of wet and dry substances 	Clean spills up immediately and effectively. After cleaning, the floor may be wet for some time. Use appropriate signs to tell people the floor is still wet and arrange alternative bypass routes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trailing cables 	Position equipment to avoid cables crossing pedestrian routes; use cable covers to securely fix to surfaces; restrict access to prevent contact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous rubbish, for example plastic bags 	Keep areas clear, remove rubbish and do not allow to build up.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugs/mats 	Ensure mats are securely fixed and do not have curling edges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slippery surfaces 	Assess the cause and treat accordingly, for example treat chemically, use appropriate cleaning method, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change from wet to dry floor surface 	Suitable footwear; warn of risks by using signs; locate doormats where these changes are likely.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor lighting 	Improve lighting levels and placement of light fittings to ensure more even lighting of all floor areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes of level 	Improve lighting; add apparent/obvious tread nosings; paint edge or similar; warning signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slopes 	Improve visibility; provide hand rails; use floor markings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke/steam obscuring view 	Eliminate or control by redirecting it away from risk areas; improve ventilation and warn of it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable footwear 	Ensure workers choose suitable footwear, particularly with the correct type of sole.

14 EQUIPMENT CAUSING SPILLS

Any equipment causing spills must be reported as soon as possible so a suitable repair can be arranged.

15 LEAKS AND SPILLAGES

Where a leak or spillage occurs and is likely to be a slipping hazard, immediate steps must be taken to fence it off, mop it up, or cover it with absorbent granules or segregate the area where this can't be done immediately.

16 SNOW AND ICE

Arrangements will be made to minimise risks from snow and ice. This may involve gritting, snow clearing and closure of some routes, particularly outside stairs, ladders and walkways on roofs.

17 STAIRCASES

Every open side of a staircase must be securely fenced. As a minimum the fencing should consist of an upper rail at 900mm or higher, a lower rail and toe board.

In summary Badger will ensure:

- That the site is kept sufficiently clean and tidy.
- That sufficient lighting is provided.
- An effective maintenance system is in place to ensure regular checks and sufficient maintenance of equipment and flooring.
- Suitable safety footwear is provided where necessary appropriate to the floor surface.
- Falls from height are sufficiently assessed and suitable controls are put into action.
- Removable trip hazards are moved and fixed trip hazards including changes in floor level are highlighted.