

# Safety Matters: Avoiding Painful and Costly Slips

From your safety partners at BHS Insurance

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Working in a public garden means that your workday depends somewhat on the weather. Wet walking surfaces both indoors and out can present serious slipping hazards for you, your co-workers and guests.

In fact, surfaces that are wet for any reason—weather-related or not—are a workplace hazard. Water can come from rain, watering plants, cleaning, accidental spills, winter conditions or activities that require the use of water. Slipping on a wet surface can result in bruises, strains and sprains, lacerations, fractures, head trauma and even fatality. In addition to pain, you could be looking at lost wages. There are several steps you can take to keep yourself and your team safe.

## Preventing Hazards

Each work space is unique, so the way you deal with wet surfaces may vary. However, following these general guidelines is a good start.

- Clean up spills or wet areas immediately.
- Investigate alternative floor surfaces and/or floor treatment products to reduce slippery conditions.
- Indoors, use caution signs to clearly identify when a surface is wet or likely to become wet and remove them as soon as the surface is dry.
- Barricade affected areas where possible.
- Check for ungrounded equipment and uninsulated wires near wet areas. Never use electrical equipment while standing on a wet surface.
- Request to work in an alternate area when your workspace is wet.
- Wear proper footwear if you regularly encounter wet work spaces in your workday. Ensure good drainage to prevent standing water and speed drying.
- Use pumps to disperse water.

## Footwear Counts

Choose the right shoes and you will be much less likely to slip on wet surfaces. Shoes or boots with cleats and soft rubber soles and heels provide traction, protecting you from slips in many cases. With winter weather approaching, choosing the appropriate footwear is even more critical to completing outdoor activities without injury.

## Avoiding Slips

Follow these tips to reduce your risk of slipping and falling:

- Slow down! Rushing is not worth a serious injury.
- Take small steps to keep your balance centered.
- Make wide turns at corners.
- Use handrails if present.
- Concentrate on the surface you are walking on.
- Be prepared for slippery patches.

## Cooperate and Stay Alert

We care about your safety at BHS Insurance. If you have any doubt about the safety of the place where you are working, talk to your supervisor. It takes the cooperation of our entire team to keep our worksite safe!

