

MARICOPA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Slips, Trips and Falls Prevention Program

March 1, 2013

I. PURPOSE

For several years the number one cause of workers' compensation claims for MCCCC employees have been due to injuries sustained from slip, trip and fall events. In order to reduce the number of injuries to employees, MCCCC has implemented the following written programs for the prevention of slips, trips and falls. It is important for all employees to understand virtually all injuries are preventable, and it is the goal of MCCCC to provide a workplace free of hazards for all MCCCC employees.

II. DEFINITIONS

Slips: occur when there is too little friction or traction between your feet and the walking surface. Some of the most common causes of slips are wet or icy surfaces, spills and poor tread (or too little tread surface) on footwear.

Trips: commonly occur when your foot strikes an object and your momentum throws you off balance. Usually, trips are due to an uneven walking surface like a concrete walkway which has buckled and is now not level.

Falls: refer to occurrences where an employee falls from one level to another such as when using a ladder or other device putting the person at a higher elevation.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The College President has the responsibility to ensure this written program is made available to all employees under their charge and the provisions contained within are followed.
- B. All supervisors are responsible for assisting the College President in providing a workplace free of recognized hazards in accordance with Federal and State law. They are also responsible to ensure any safety issues reported to them by the employees they supervise are delivered to the appropriate contact on campus to address the issue(s).
- C. All employees are responsible for reporting any unsafe working conditions or issues to their immediate supervisor. Additionally, they are responsible for adhering to all safety policies, regulations and procedures established by MCCCC.

IV. PROCEDURES

Employees who observe a slip, trip or fall hazard are required to report the issue to their supervisor unless the concern can be immediately addressed (i.e. spill can be wiped up or ladder can be adjusted to more stable surface).

A. Slips

1. When dealing with any liquid on a walking path or surface, assess if the issue can be immediately addressed using paper towels or other absorbent materials.
2. If the issue cannot be addressed immediately, because it is too large or appears to contain blood or other bodily fluids, attempt to cordon off the area from all traffic (pedestrians, carts, etc.). Report the hazard to the Director of Facilities or, if after hours, to the Public Safety Office.
3. Facilities or Public Safety personnel should assess the issue, ensure the cordon is effective and add additional equipment (wet floor signs, orange cones) if needed. They will determine the best way to address the spill in accordance with the college's Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.

B. Trips

1. Tripping hazards can appear almost anywhere and often are a result of poor housekeeping. If you see a potential tripping hazard, attempt to address the issue immediately and/or speak with the person whose items are creating the hazard. Explain the reason for your concern and try to remedy the problem before someone is injured.
2. If you are not able to address the issue, report the hazard to the Director of Facilities or, if after hours, to the Public Safety Office. Attempt to cordon off the hazard using nearby materials.
3. Facilities or Public Safety personnel should assess the issue, ensure the cordon is effective and add additional equipment (orange cones, hazard tape) if needed. The Director of Facilities will determine the timeframe for addressing the issue and the safety measures should stay in place until the tripping hazard has been corrected.

C. Falls

1. Falling hazards are typically associated with employees being at higher elevations while performing a work activity. Falls from even a couple feet up can be deadly due to the potential for head injury and trauma. If you witness a potential fall injury you need to intervene immediately to prevent the fall.
2. If no one is currently working on the ladder or other device being used to elevate contact the Director of Facilities or, if after hours, the Public Safety Office. They will assess the issue and determine the best course of action.
3. All employees who use ladders or may use a ladder, even for a short period of time, should review the proper ladder use procedures outlined in this written standard.

V. PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS

As with all hazards there are some preventative things you can do to lessen the likelihood of suffering a slip, trip or fall injury such as:

- When surfaces are wet, shorten your stride, walk with feet pointed slightly outward and make wider turns.
- Ensure spills are reported and cleaned up immediately. Provide warning signs for wet floor areas.

- Keep exits and aisles free from obstructions of any kind.
- Walk slower and try to wear footwear with good traction.
- Wear rubber soled shoes to work and change into shoes with less tread pad (heels, pumps) once at work, if desired.
- Wear sunglasses on sunny days to better see areas of potential injury.
- Try to keep both hands free, if possible, to help maintain balance.
- Don't carry so much you restrict your view.
- Walk on walkways in good repair.
- View your path before walking and keep an eye out for uneven surfaces.
- Expect concrete bumpers and other obstacles when walking in the parking areas.
- Maintain good housekeeping in the office – put unused objects away and close doors, drawers.
- Use handrails at all times when using stairs and when available for walkways.
- NEVER use a chair in place of an approved ladder or stool.
- Inspect the ladder or stool before using it – never assume it is in good working order.
- Use the right ladder for the job. Review ladder familiarization training available through the Director of Facilities.
- Finally, be aware of your surroundings and analyze what could happen – be alert.

VI. INSPECTING EQUIPMENT

Before using any type of equipment you should inspect it for safety and serviceability. Ideally, you should have a manufacturer's label on each ladder telling you what the maximum load permissible is, use conditions (i.e. fiberglass ladders used for electrical work, not metal) and other important information including date the ladder was made. Review this information prior to using the ladder. Some other things to look for are:

- Ensure the ladder is stable when open and not warped. All four points of contact should touch the ground.
- Look for excessive wear or chipping on the side rails and paint. This may be a sign the ladder is not being properly maintained.
- Watch for splinters when using wooden ladders.
- If using a wheeled step stool, ensure the wheels lock in place and the stool doesn't move when you step on the first rung.
- Also, make sure the rubber mat is on top of the stool to help you stay in place.
- Never step on the top rung of a ladder. Ensure the ladder you use is tall enough so you don't have to use the top two steps.
- Contact the Director of Facilities for more helpful tips about ladder and stool use.
- If you have any questions about this written standard or how to prevent slips, trips and falls, please contact the District Occupational Health and Safety Manager at (480) 731-8840.