

### **Underfoot Conditions (Slips, Trips & Falls)**

**Good housekeeping at work should be given the same importance as it is at home by all of us. Slips and trips are the cause of most of the accidents on our sites – they are all easily preventable.**

#### **Why do they occur?**

- Most injuries from slips, trips and falls occur because of poor housekeeping.
- Others because people don't keep to the established pedestrian routes.
- Many items left on the ground, such as coiled cables, hand tools, lengths of pipe or timber, will trip someone if not deposited in a safe position.
- Spilt substances, such as oils and greases, will form a slip hazard if not immediately cleaned up.
- General debris, such as brick and block fragments, can quickly accumulate and form a tripping hazard if it is not cleaned up as it is created.
- Trailing cables are another frequent cause of tripping.
- Manholes and chambers with no covers, or inadequate temporary covers.
- Mud left on the rungs of a ladder by the previous user will be a slipping and falling hazard for the next person.
- Reduced levels of natural light, for example during winter afternoons, can easily increase the tripping hazards if adequate access lighting is not provided. Tools, equipment and materials which are visible in full daylight might be hidden in semi-darkness.

#### **What can you do about it?**

- Clear up waste materials as you create them. Lightweight waste should be bagged or bundled, and nails removed from waste timber.
- Keep to established pedestrian routes.
- Do not leave tools, equipment or unused materials lying about on the floor.
- If you are using substances which could possibly spill, ensure that you have a means of effectively clearing up the spillage.
- As far as possible, route cables for power tools above head height. If cables have to be routed at floor level, try to avoid crossing pedestrian walkways.
- If the site is muddy, scrape mud off your boots before climbing ladders or walking anywhere else where it might be a danger to others.
- Ensure manholes and chambers are securely covered.
- Be aware of the increased risks of tripping as the level of natural light fades. Ensure that all tools, equipment and materials are stored in a safe location.

#### **Questions:**

- 1 Whose responsibility is good housekeeping?
- 2 What advantages are there to practising good housekeeping?

#### **Remember:**

**We all have a duty to tidy up our rubbish. Tidy up as you go, your carelessness could cause serious injuries to someone else - good housekeeping means a safer site.**

Further Information:- CIP Manual, Sections 3 & 4  
Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996