

Walking and Working Surface Requirements

Each year thousands of workers are injured as a result of slip, trip and fall accidents. Many could have been prevented. Slip, trip and fall injuries occur for many different reasons. However, steps can be taken to ensure maximum workplace safety.

Both the US Justice Department and Department of Labor have set minimum safety guidelines for walkway safety that are enforced under OSHA and ADA. In 2001, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) published a "Standard for the Provision of Slip Resistance on Walking/Working Surfaces" (ANSI A1264.2-2001) which describes methods for testing walkway surfaces as well as enhancing the safety of walkway materials. The following checklist can best be used as a method of minimizing slip, trip and fall occurrences using readily available resources.

In June of 2006 the NFSI was recognized by ANSI as an Accredited Standards Developer (ASD). It is anticipated that the NFSI's standards will soon become ANSI standards.

This checklist is by no means all inclusive, and it may be necessary to make changes to cover specific areas in your own area.

Subject	Yes	No	Requirements	Action/Comment
Hazard Identification			Post caution signs for all potentially hazardous walkways. Select signs with large open bottoms to cover hazards.	
			Remove tracked-in rain or spilled liquids.	
			Routinely sweep and or dust mop loose debris.	
			Clean up chemical spills using an appropriate absorbent material.	
			Use floor signs that are above knee height and visible from 360 degrees, and locate them near doorways leading outside.	
			Eliminate chronic hazards by implementing design changes and frequent equipment inspection/servicing.	
			Relocate improperly stored materials as to prevent trip hazards.	
			Secure electrical wiring that runs across the floor with yellow tape or low-profile beveled edge conduit .	
			Remove ice or snow from exterior walkways and parking lots.	
			Promptly repair parking lot potholes, cracks, and other walkway hazards.	
			Mark all physical hazards, including inclines, drop-offs, and temporary walkways using yellow slip resistant tape or paint.	
Flooring and Stairs			Barricade doors of single entrance rooms when mopping.	
			Use appropriate high-traction walkway materials for anticipated environmental conditions. Select appropriate materials that are NFSI Certified for performance.	
			Inspect walkway surfaces for hazards including: hole, chips, cracks, elevations or slippery deposits. Inspect carpeting for fraying edges, rips and tears. Repair or maintain as necessary.	

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Flooring and Stairs (continued)			Use slip resistant stair treads and landings with abrasive stair nosing. Verify stair risers are uniform in height and treads are of adequate width.	
			Stairways and changes in interior elevations should be well lighted and free of obstacles.	
Matting and Grating			Use recessed absorbent "walk-off" matting to control migration of soil and liquid hazards at all interior doorways that lead to the outside. Inspect and clean regularly.	
			Use low-profile, abrasive matting in areas where grease, oil or other hazardous liquids may be present.	
			Mats whose thickness (vertical height) of 1/4" or greater may pose a trip hazard and shall have beveled edges of a contrasting color.	
			Select mats with a slip-resistant backing on wet surfaces to reduce "surf-boarding" (NFSI Certified).	
			Routinely inspect mats for buckling, curling or material defects.	
			Inspect floor grates to insure that they are level with surrounding walkway surfaces. The size of the opening in the grate should be small enough so as not to allow a shoe heel to catch.	
			Do not place mats over uneven or damaged surfaces.	
			Mats shall be properly secured to the floor as to prevent migration, buckling, curling, etc.	
Cleaning Chemicals and Finishes			Maintain walkway surfaces using high-traction cleaning products and/or finishes. Select products that are NFSI Certified for performance.	
			Rinse floors thoroughly after cleaning as to reduce the buildup of polymerized films.	
Housekeeping Procedures			Keep all work environments, passageways, storerooms and service rooms clean, sanitary, orderly and free of obstacles.	
			Keep workroom floors clean and as dry as possible. Where wet processes are used, provide drainage, false floors, platforms, mats or other dry standing places where practical.	
			Keep floors, working places and passageways free of protruding nails, splinters, holes, loose boards or tiles.	
			Practice sound recordkeeping by keeping a cleaning log noting products used, surfaces cleaned, when and by whom tasks were performed, and cleaning procedures.	
Inspections			Inspect walkways regularly (minimum of once per hour).	
			It is recommended that walkway surfaces be audited on a regular basis to identify and eliminate potential slip hazards. Walkway audits shall be conducted per the guidelines as published by the NFSI.	
Employee Training			Uniformly train employees about established safety procedures, stressing that safety is everyone's job.	
			Provide all employees with a consistent level of product usage training.	

Subject	Yes	No	Requirements	Action/Comment
Employee Training (cont.)			Post written slip-and-fall prevention and accident handling policies on employee bulletin boards.	
			Keep a training log for each employee to sign that acknowledges they were trained on the company's comprehensive slip-and-fall prevention strategy.	
Footwear			Employees should be encouraged to wear slip-resistant footwear or protective overshoes. Employers shall provide them when necessary.	