

FALL PREVENTION FOR OFFICE WORKERS

Avoiding Slips and Falls At The Office

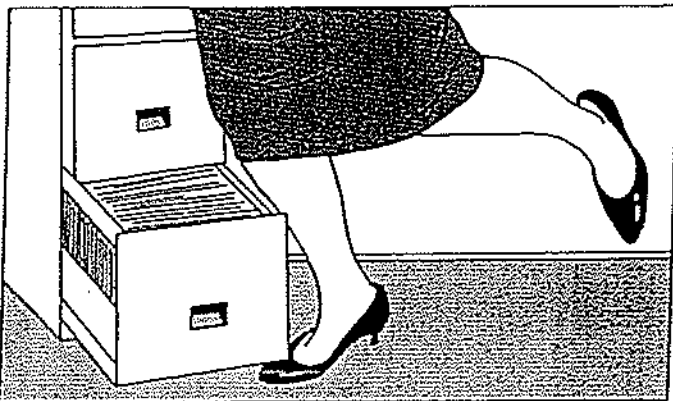
It may come as a surprise that falls are the most common type of office injury. Yet almost all falls can be prevented by using common safety sense and learning how to recognize and correct typical fall hazards in the office environment.

Understanding Balance

A fall occurs when you lose your balance and your footing. In short, your center of gravity is displaced and there's nowhere to go but down. You may be thrown off balance by a slip (on a wet floor, for example) or a trip (over an obstacle in your path), but once you lose your footing and support, a fall is inevitable.

Common Fall Hazards

One of the most common causes of office falls is tripping over an open desk or file drawer. Bending while seated in an unstable chair and tripping over electrical cords or wires are other common hazards. Office falls are frequently caused by using makeshift "ladders" (such as a chair, or a stack of boxes) and by slipping on wet floors (by the water cooler or coffee machine, for example). Loose carpeting, objects stored in halls or walkways, and inadequate lighting are other hazards that invite accidental falls. Fortunately, all of these fall hazards are preventable. The following checklist can help you stop a fall before it happens.



One of the most common causes of office falls is tripping over an open drawer.



Look before you walk—make sure your pathway is clear.

Fall Prevention Checklist

- Look before you walk—make sure your pathway is clear.
- Close drawers after every use.
- Avoid bending, twisting, and leaning backwards while seated.
- Secure electrical cords and wires away from walkways.
- Always use an appropriate stepladder for overhead reaching.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- If you see anything on the floor—a pen, a paper clip, etc.—pick it up.
- Report loose carpeting or damaged flooring to appropriate manager.
- Make sure walkways are well-lighted.
- Walk, don't run!

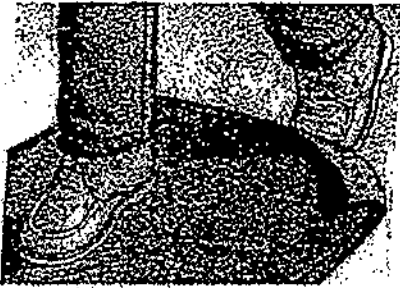


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THE STATE INSURANCE FUND
LOSS CONTROL PROGRAM

Slips, Trips and Falls

Avoid slips and trips...



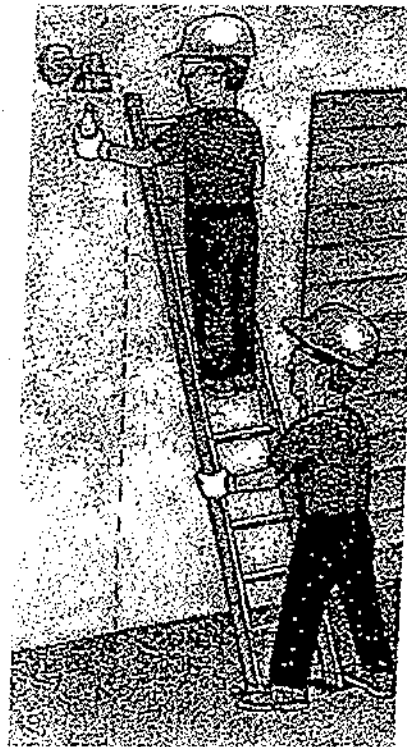
④ Make sure walkways and stairs are well lit.

- ④ Look before you walk—make sure your pathway is clear.
- ④ Wear slip-resistant, well-fitted footwear.
- ④ Clean up debris after each job and report accidental spills immediately.
- ④ Secure wires, cords and cables away from walkways.
- ④ Use safety cages and fall restraint devices when available.
- ④ Walk, don't run!

Use ladders safely...

④ Use the 4-to-1 ladder rule—set the base of the ladder one foot away from the wall for every four feet of ladder height.

④ Tie off the ladder or have someone support the base.



④ Never use the top two rungs of a ladder.

④ Never over-reach, especially while on a ladder.

SAFETY HAZARDS



New York State Insurance Fund

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WORKING SAFELY WITH LADDERS

Step And Straight Ladder Guidelines

Most of us use ladders from time to time—at our worksites, in the office, or at home. Yet few of us stop to review the basic rules for working safely with ladders. The following safety guidelines can help anyone who works with ladders prevent accidental falls, injuries, and disability.

Step Ladders

When working on step ladders, remember never to climb past the second rung from the top. Make sure that the spreaders are functional and locked in place before climbing the ladder. If the ladder is positioned by a door or walkway, make sure that the door is locked or the walkway barricaded to prevent collisions. Do not overreach while working on a step-ladder—reposition the ladder to avoid leaning over the base of support.

Straight Ladders

When working on straight ladders, use the four-to-one rule: position the ladder base one foot away from the wall for every four feet of ladder height (up to the support point). Never climb past the third rung from the top on a straight ladder. A straight ladder should extend at least 3 feet past its support point. Tie down your ladder as close to the support point as possible. Make sure that straight ladders have safety feet. To avoid overreaching, do not let the trunk of your body extend past the side of the ladder.

General Guidelines

Persons who work on ladders should wear slip-resistant footwear, and make sure that ladder rungs are free of oil, grease, or other slippery substances. Before climbing any ladder, check its condition. Are nuts and bolts tightened? Are rungs secure? Do spreaders work? Are safety feet functional? If the ladder is in good condition, climb and descend it facing the ladder itself, and holding on with both hands. If you must carry tools, use a tool belt or a bucket attached to a hand line to pull tools up and down. When working on ladders, hold onto the ladder with



If the ladder is positioned by a door or walkway, make sure that the door is locked or the walkway barricaded to prevent collisions.



A straight ladder should extend at least 3 feet past its support point. Tie down your ladder as close to the support point as possible.

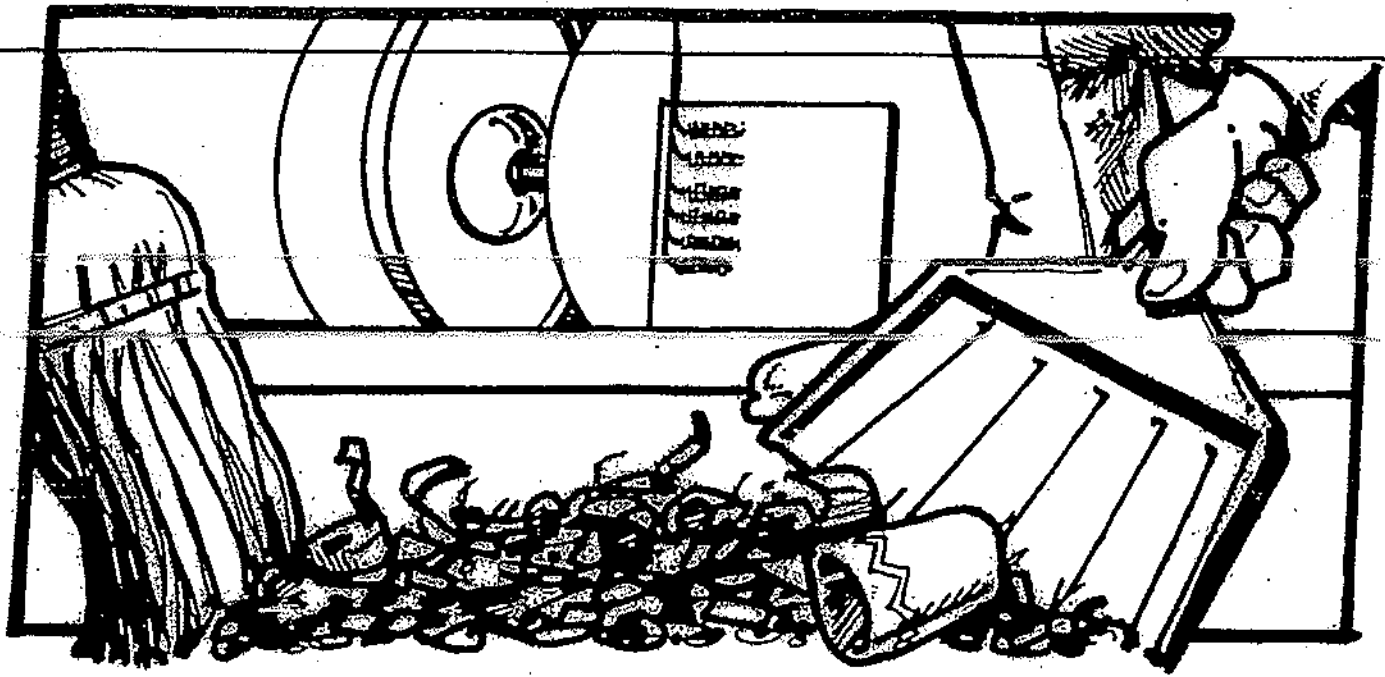
one hand at all times. And remember, *never* use a metal ladder when working with electrical current.

Prevent A Fall

By using these tips for ladder safety, you can help prevent accidental falls, injuries, and disability. All of us use ladders from time to time, so ladder safety should be everyone's concern.



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Clean up
before you
slip up.



New York State Insurance Fund

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Do your part to
PREVENT
slips and falls.



Clean up.



Pick up.



Wipe up.