

S1 – Toolbox Talk

Access & Egress – Stairs & Walkways

Stairways and walkways in all places of business can be the cause of accidents resulting in injury. These areas do not typically receive the maintenance they need, since they are perceived as merely passageways and not production areas. When either ascending or descending a flight of stairs, always keep one hand free to use the handrail.

- Keep all stairs and walkways clear of debris and potentially slippery substances such as: ice, snow, water, oil, or grease
- Keep passageways free of tools, equipment and other materials. Always practice good housekeeping in these non-production areas
- When walkways and stairs are provided, use them. Do not jeopardise your safety to save a few steps or a few seconds
- Railings should have top rails, mid rails, posts, and toe boards
- You may have a small office located within a larger building with its roof area used for storing materials. Review the space's access and guarding. Make sure it has a full stairway or ladder access and is equipped with perimeter railings. It is also wise to ask an engineer to calculate the maximum load that the roof area can bear
- Handrails can become loose and may need to be re-secured or replaced. Do not assume someone else will repair or report it. Immediately mention any problem to the appropriate person, ie your supervisor
- Where there are elevation changes in walkways, highlight the change so it is visible. Identifying the change alerts those unfamiliar with the walkway to the hazard
- Secure electrical cords and hoses so that they do not lie across walkways. If electrical cords must be laid across walkways, use approved cord covers whenever possible
- Consider setting up a caution sign or flagging to alert individuals of cords or hoses in their path until a permanent 'approved' solution can be put into place
- Take small steps on wet and icy walkways
- Where possible, salt/grit walkways the night before icy conditions
- Ensure all salt/grit containers are full and replenished when used
- Use handholds to stabilise yourself when they are available
- Asphalt and oiled surfaces can also be hazardous because rain water may produce an oil sheen and create slippery walking conditions.

Unlike some exposures, stairway hazards or slippery walkways can appear overnight. Take action to remedy the problem when you see it.



Training register

Date

Name of attendee

Signature

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