



SafetyMatters

Issue 4, December 2012

Getting a grip! Reducing slips, trips and falls

Did you know?

About 100 slips or trips each year cause injury to staff, students or visitors at the University of Manchester

Yes it's true. Slips and trips are the largest single cause of accidental injury on campus; they account for around a quarter of all reports sent to Safety Services.

Slips and trips are often thought of as amusing. Who has not seen someone slip on or trip over something and laughed as the person struggled to regain their balance?

Far from being funny, slips and trips often result in a fall and the injuries sustained can be serious. Of the hundred accidents we have each year around 15 cause injuries serious enough to be reported to the Health & Safety Executive for example, a broken wrist.

Suffering a broken wrist is painful and distressing for the injured person. But just think for a moment how that injury might affect not only their work life but their family and social life too.

What if you were that injured person? How would you take a shower/bath, lift a child, do the shopping, drive the car, play your favourite sport?

Think too of your colleagues who might have to pick up the extra tasks whilst you are off work or are on reduced duties.

Simple mistakes can shatter lives...



Picture: From a HSE's Shattered Lives poster.

Welcome to this edition of Safety Matters where the main focus is on slips and trips and the falls that often follow them.

Here you can read about:

- The type of accidents we have
- University strategy to reduce these
- What is being done
- What you can do to help.

What's the most common cause of slips and trips at the University?

The accidents reported to us don't always state a clear cause, and sometimes, people don't really know what caused them to fall, because it all happens so quickly. But, where we do have information, the most common causes given are:

- Slipping on wet floors and surfaces
- Tripping over defective flooring or something that has been placed or left on the floor

Also, the last two winters have been quite severe and the icy conditions have caused a number of slips and falls which have

contributed to the overall picture.

Very often it is a number of things which contribute to an accident, not just the obvious and immediate cause, for example failing to notice obstacle/liquid on the floor when on the phone or chatting to a colleague.

Slips and trips strategy and action plan

Reducing the number of slips and trips is a significant issue for us and efforts are being made to do this.

The University has a Slips and Trips Strategy and Action Plan with work assigned to Estates and Facilities and Safety Services that is currently being worked through.

Estates and Facilities have been working hard to improve the general landscape of the campus and one aspect has been to renew paving in some areas, eg Burlington St.

They are also looking at how best to respond in adverse weather conditions, e.g. by targetting gritting to priority routes.

If you want to read the strategy or action plan go to <http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/index.htm>

What can you do?

Play your part in reducing slips, trips and falls

Think!
Could someone fall over that?

Reducing the risk of you, or someone else, falling is not just up to Estates and Facilities or Safety Services; we all can play a part.

We are all busy people, but if we are mindful of what *could* happen, we can make a difference.

If you see a situation like those below, either report it or do what you can to reduce the risk of someone else getting hurt.



If it's yours - move it out of the way!



Broken paving around campus
- contact the Estates Helpdesk
Tel 52424 (8am- 4pm Monday to Friday)

or online at

<http://www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/BusinessUnits/Helpdesk/NewRequest.asp>

We three kings - Slid, Merry & Far!



At this time of year, there's an increase in people slipping on wet leaves and ice and getting injured.

The message from Safety Services is:

"We just want people to stop and think.

If it's icy outside:

- wear shoes with a good grip,
- take your time, and
- try to keep your hands free, particularly near icy patches.

If you see something that might cause someone to slip, report it to the Estates helpdesk on 52424.

Remember, you might not slip, but the person behind you might."