

SEMPER SAFE

PREVENT SLIP, TRIP AND FALL INJURIES

The National Safety Council estimates that off-the-job injuries and fatalities cost the U.S. almost \$200 billion annually in lost productivity. In fact, 9 out of 10 unintentional injury deaths and two-thirds of disabling injuries occurred off the job. Slips, trips and falls are one of these leading causes of death off-the-job and is a major concern regarding employee health and safety.

Falls are a leading cause of traumatic occupational death among workers according to statistics from the Department of Labor. Additionally, an OSHA study of 99 fall-related fatalities suggests that virtually all of those deaths could have been prevented by the use of guardrails, body harnesses, safety nets, floor opening covers, or other means that would reduce personnel exposure to fall hazards. A major subset of these mishaps involves ladders, which are involved in more than 30,000 injuries per year. In all, falls alone accounted for 17,700 deaths annually with 17,000 occurring off-duty.

Most falls are preventable. Most people attribute falls to being clumsy or not paying attention, but many risk factors exist. Reduce your risk and find fall hazards in your workplace and at home to prevent injuries and keep others safe.

As mentioned earlier, slips, trips and fall injuries are most common off-duty, but are a hazard to be aware while on-duty too. Here are a few tips to reduce these types of mishaps:

- Arrange furniture to create open pathways to walk through.
- Keep stairwells and hallways free and clear of clutter.
- Tuck telephone and electrical cords out of walkways.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use non-skid rugs to reduce chances of slipping on smooth flooring, like bathrooms.
- Install handrails in stairways, porches, and grab bars in bathrooms by toilets, tubs, and showers.
- Maintain appropriate lighting both indoors and on outdoor walkways.
- Use sturdy step stools when climbing or reaching for high places. Never stand on tables, chairs, or surface with wheels.
- Periodically check outdoor walkways and steps for repairs as necessary.
- Wear appropriate footwear for specific work areas.
- Be aware that alcohol or other drugs, including prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, can affect your balance and increase risk of falling.

Commanders and Leaders: You are responsible for the safety of your personnel. It is your duty to ensure that your personnel are aware of the importance of fall protection. Your unit should have a fall protection program that implements the requirements of NAVMC DIR 5100.8. All Marines should incorporate slips, trips and fall hazard awareness training as part of your unit's safety program annual training. Ensure that personnel are aware of the potential dangers and the importance of the use of smart ORM to avoid mishaps on and off-duty. For more information contact your Unit Safety Officer or your Base Safety Representative anytime.

For additional information feel free to contact the MCI-EAST-MCB Camp Lejeune Safety Department at (910) 451-5725.

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LEADERS GUIDE