Winter Safety Tips – Prevention of Slips, Trips and Falls

- Walk slowly and carefully on icy or snowy walkways. Take short, deliberate steps in which the mid-foot strikes the ground first, not the heel. The body should always be centred over the feet. This avoids slips at the heel strike phase of gait, the most common slip occurrence. Slowing the walking pace further reduces the likelihood of slipping.
- Avoid areas with poor lighting, when possible.
- Change direction carefully when walking on slippery surfaces.
- Avoid icy areas of walkways when there is an alternate route.
- Be aware that black ice can look like wet pavement.
- Be especially cautious when new snow may have hidden icy patches beneath it.
- Ensure footwear has good treads and is appropriate for cold or wet weather.
- Be aware that walkways or stairs at any premises could be slippery.
- Keep walkways clear of debris, water, ice and slippery materials when you can do so.
- Avoid walking with your hands in your pockets; keep hands free for balance.
- Where possible, avoid carrying large amounts of materials.
- Carry items in a way that will not throw you off balance or obstruct vision. It is important to see where you are walking.
- Use handrails on stairs, so you can catch yourself if you slip on icy steps.
- Place your full attention on walking. Digging in your pocketbook or backpack or using cell phones or other devices while walking is dangerous.
- Be aware of changes in friction on walking surfaces (for example walking from snow to ice, from curb to road, or from inside to outside).
- Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them.
- Be particularly careful of slippery conditions in the morning when melt water from the previous day may be frozen.
- To the extent possible, avoid climbing over snow banks and look for an alternate route.
- Watch out for slippery parking lots, roadways, or sidewalks when stepping out of a vehicle.
- Use special care when entering or exiting vehicles. Don't jump from vehicles and equipment.
- When getting out of your vehicle, look down at the surface. If it's coated with ice you might want to park in a different place. Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them.
- Use the vehicle for support. Where practicable, brace yourself with the vehicle door and seat back before standing. This will give you some stability.
- When climbing in or out of a vehicle, face the vehicle, whenever practicable, and always use the three point contact rule; always keep three points in contact with the vehicle, either one hand and two feet, or two hands and one foot.
- Use the access steps, footholds, handholds and rails provided on the vehicle to support you when entering or exiting.
• When entering buildings or homes, be aware that immediate entrances and stairs may be slippery from melted ice or snow. When you see such a hazard, bring it to the attention of the person in charge.
• Remove the snow from the soles of your footwear as you enter a building or vehicle.
• Bring to the attention of your manager or supervisor any City walkways or entrances that are slippery.
• Report any concerns, hazards, or slip, trip or fall incidents to your supervisor.