



Housekeeping: preventing slips, trips and falls

Audience: Site Operatives

Presenter: GHSEA, Site Manager, Trade Supervisors



The Risk

If someone has a slip, trip or fall even on a same level surface it can suffer serious injury. Most injuries occur because of poor housekeeping.

- Leaving items, such as cables, tools and surplus materials on the ground will create trip hazards.
- General debris and waste, such as brick and block fragments can quickly accumulate and form a tripping hazard.
- Debris such as packaging and banding can form trip hazards.
- Covering hazards such as pot holes and drains can cause an accident.
- Substances such as mud, leaves and diesel on roads and pathways can cause a slipping and falling hazard.
- Reduced levels of natural light, for example, during winter afternoons, can easily increase the tripping hazards if adequate lighting is not available. Tools, equipment and materials that are visible in full daylight might be hidden in semi-darkness or areas of poor lighting.
- Pot holes, changes in levels and raised drain covers can all lead to trips and falls.



Responsibilities

Good housekeeping arrangements are ultimately the responsibility of site management but you have your part to play in ensuring a safe site:

- Clear up waste materials as you create them, always ensure that all waste is removed from site or placed into the skips provided.
- Nails should be removed from waste timber and disposed of safely.
- Work in a tidy manner, do not leave tools, equipment or unused materials lying around the site.
- If you are using substances that could spill, ensure that you have a means of effectively clearing up the spillage (drip trays/ spill kits).
- Route power cables so they do not form a trip hazard to other workers.
- Sites get muddy, make sure boots are cleaned off before accessing plant or climbing ladders. Do not spread mud by walking into clean areas.
- Keep working areas clear of materials and tools where natural light levels may change throughout the day. Temporary lighting should be installed wherever lighting is inadequate.
- Carry out any necessary temporary repairs as soon as possible and erect signs to alert others to hazards such as pot holes and raised drain covers.
- Tell site management if you do not have the right equipment to clear up and dispose of the waste you create.
- Report all slips, trip and fall hazards to site management immediately.