

Fancy a trip?



YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, COULD BE TAKING A TRIP QUITE SOON. AND NOT THE KIND OF TRIP WHERE YOU'LL COME HOME WITH A SUNTAN AND GREAT PHOTOS, BUT THE KIND THAT ENDS IN A&E.

Slips and trips are the most common cause of major injuries at work. 95% of major slips result in broken bones and are responsible for, on average:

- over a third of all reported major injuries
- 20% of over-3-day injuries to employees
- Two fatalities per year
- 50% of all reported accidents to members of the public that happen in workplaces
- £512 million in lost production and other costs to employers
- Incalculable human cost
- More major injuries in manufacturing and the service sectors than any other cause

In the food and drink industry, slips and trips occur more often than in almost any other industry – responsible for 35% of the 'major' injuries (from a broken arm to hospitalisation) and nearly 25% of all injuries for the industry, reported to the Health and Safety Executive. That's around 1,300 injuries a year, with around 80% being slips and 20% trips.

Whether you're an employee who's suffered an injury, or an employer who's had to sort out the consequences, you'll know this kind of trip is no holiday.

Where did you slip up?

Years of experience prove that slip prevention works, and can cut injuries by 50% or more. Which of course means cutting the costs and the consequences too.

Statistics show that 90% of slips happen on floors that are wet or – in the food industry – contaminated with food product. 75% of trips are caused by obstructions, and the rest by uneven surfaces.

This means that prevention may involve:

- Preventing contamination of the floor and walkways
- Limiting the effects of contamination when it does occur
- Ensuring the floor has a sufficiently rough surface to help reduce slips
- Ensuring the floor is cleaned effectively in a way which reduces slip risk (some

- treatments actually make floors slipper)
- Providing suitable footwear
- Eliminating or reducing carrying of loads and pushing or pulling of trolleys, which increases slip risk
- Eliminating holes, slopes and uneven surfaces
- Eliminating materials and objects likely to cause tripping

It's a daunting list and – like most tasks – sounds a great deal simpler to put into practice than it actually is. Which is why we recommend you contact an expert in health and safety in the workplace, such as *ERIKS*.

After all, you wouldn't want to trip up at the first step, would you?



Paul Skade
Category Manager Tools and Maintenance
ERIKS UK



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