

QUICK TIPS To Prevent People From Falling

Carina Franca posted on July 29, 2013 06:00



...TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM FALLING



IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Slips, trips and falls are a leading cause of costly accidents to both members and visitors at church facilities. Such accidents often result from minor and major changes in surface elevations, potholes, cracks, settling or lifting of sidewalks, slippery surfaces and other conditions.

Periodic self-inspections of facilities should look for conditions that can result in slips, trips and falls, and action should be taken to correct any hazards noted.

PREVENTING

- Repair cracks, potholes and settling in roads and parking lots.
- Repair cracked and chipped sidewalks and areas where tree roots have caused uneven surfaces where edges meet
(NOTE: Until repairs are made, a yellow stripe along the edge of a hazard can help warn employees and visitors of the hazard.)
- Keep sidewalks and other walkways clear of leaves, limbs, stones and other debris.

- Install handrails on all steps and ramps where no handrails currently exist. Handrails help provide support for those who need additional help in climbing up or down a step or stairs.
- Repair broken or loose handrails, damaged steps, stair edgings and linoleum, carpet or other damaged materials on stairs.
- Repair or replace damaged linoleum or tile surfaces.
- Repair torn carpets and stretch wrinkled carpets.
- Use doormats with tapered edges and non-slip bottoms in door entranceways. (The use of towels, scatter rugs, and other slippery materials on floors can cause slips, trips and falls.)
- Eliminate sources of leaks.
- Cafeterias and kitchens should give a high priority to the prevention and elimination of hazardous wet floor conditions, including:
 - Providing rubber mats with tapered edges around kitchen dishwashing areas, and other key locations of the kitchen where water is a problem.
 - Ensuring that cafeteria freezers operate properly to prevent ice buildup on freezer floors.
 - Adopt a program of “Zero Tolerance” for spills and other conditions that result in wet floors. The program would include:
 - Requiring employees to immediately clean up spills or other wet floor conditions when observed, or if duties prevent such action, ensuring that the appropriate department is notified immediately after a spill or wet floor is noticed;
 - Putting out “Wet Floor” signs; and
 - Leaving “Wet Floor” signs in place until the floor is dry.
 - Salt or sand icy surfaces promptly.
 - Do not run electrical cords, phone cords, computer cables or plumbing, etc. across floors and passageways.
 - Eliminate needless fixed obstructions.
 - Maintain good housekeeping in storage areas, workspaces, and corridors.
 - Ensure that adequate lighting is available in all areas of the facility.

PAYING ATTENTION TO WORK PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES

Many slips and falls can be attributed to employee work practices and equipment.

- Employees should wear proper footwear with slip-resistant soles and heels.
- Train employees in the proper use of ladders and stepladders and do not allow them to stand on chairs, boxes, desks, etc.
- Do not allow employees to get on or off moving vehicles.
- Prohibit running and hurrying, particularly up and down stairs.
- Paint unavoidable tripping hazards in contrasting colors.
- Install required barricades and warning signs where fall hazards exist.
- Provide fall protection equipment and train employees in its use.

Carina Franca