Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls in Winter

Seasonal hazards like snow and ice on walking areas and in parking lots increase the risk of slipping and falling particularly during storms when snow accumulation is significant but also when snow hides ice patches or when puddles may be black ice.

To help prevent falls and injuries in winter be on the lookout for slippery conditions and keep these simple safety tips in mind when walking outdoors:

- **Wear footwear with heavy treads** for increased traction.
- **Plan ahead and don't rush** or travel too quickly for the walking surface conditions**.**
- **Pay attention while walking.** Avoid distractions. Adjust how you walk according to the weather conditions.
- **Don't take shortcuts.** A shortcut path may be dangerous since it is less likely that snow and ice removal occurred. Walk on cleared well-lit pathways.
- **Proceed carefully when getting in and out of vehicles.** Parking lots and sidewalks may not yet be cleared when you arrive for or leave from work.
- **Avoid carrying items.** Try to keep hands empty so arms are free to provide balance and move for stabilization.
- **Walk Slowly** and carefully on icy or snowy walkways. Take short and deliberate steps to preventing slipping and falling.
- **Clear your footwear of snow.** Stamp your feet to clean out footwear treads prior to entering buildings.
- **Enter buildings slowly and watch for slippery floors & puddles.** Tracked in snow from footwear often causes puddles and slippery surfaces.
- **Pay attention to transitions in buildings.** Stepping off wet carpets onto tile flooring.

Seasonal Hazards to Watch For - Snow and Ice

Be on the lookout for these hazardous conditions:

- snowy and ice-covered sidewalks and paths
- slippery surfaces due to water, ice or snow from footwear
- black-ice formation (nearly invisible patches of ice on paved surfaces that can be very slippery)

As a reminder:

- send an email to Physical Resources at snow@pr.uoguelph.ca [1] if snow removal, salting or sanding is required at the Guelph Campus. For all other locations, contact Facilities Management in your area.
- For all other snow help on campus, including immediate snow assistance for persons with disabilities please refer to the Physical Resources Snow Removal Information [2]
- To report an injury or incident please follow the University Injury Reporting Process [3] and complete the Incident Reporting Form [4]. [5]

Additional resources on the prevention of Slip Trips and Falls in Winter:

- EHS Winter Bulletin [6]
- EHS Winter Poster-Guelph Campus [7]
- EHS Winter Poster-Ridgetown Campus & Research Stations [8]
- Physical Resources - Snow Help on Guelph Campus [9]

General resource on the prevention of Slips, Trips and Falls in any season and indoors:

- General Poster on Slips, Trips and Falls [10]

Source URL:https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/preventing-slips

Links
[1] mailto:snow@pr.uoguelph.ca [2] https://www.pr.uoguelph.ca/what-we-do/snow-removal-information [3] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/incident-and-injury-reporting/injury-reporting-process [4] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Incident%20Reporting%20Form_3.pdf [5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Incident%20Reporting%20Form_2.pdf [6] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-bulletins [7] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Winter%20Slip%20Trip%20Fall%20%2011x17%20Poster_0_0.pdf [8] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Slip%20Trip%2011x17%20Poster_Ridgetown%20and%20Research%20Stations_0_0.pdf [9] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/snow_help_poster2.pdf [10] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/system/files/Preventing%20STF%20%281%29.jpg