



Safety Matters

Talking Points for St. Moritz

Seubert & Associates : Your workplace safety partner

Wet Weather and Work Surfaces

Wet weather can be a nuisance. It makes travel difficult and causes wet messes in the buildings and places you work. Moreover, the wet walking surfaces it creates both indoors and outdoors present a serious slipping hazard for you and your co-workers.

In fact, surfaces that are wet for any reason – weather-related or not – are a workplace hazard. Water can come from rain, cleaning and accident spills, wet winter conditions or activities that require the use of water. Slipping on a wet surface can result in bruises, strains and sprains, lacerations, fractures, head trauma and even fatality. And those incidents can stack up to lost wages or a lawsuit. Fortunately, there are several steps you can take to keep your team safe.

Ways of Lowering Risk

Each work area is different, so the way you deal with wet surfaces may vary. However, following these general guidelines is a good start.

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use caution signs to clearly identify when a surface is wet or likely to become wet and remove the signs as soon as the surface is dry.
- Barricade affected areas where possible.
- Check for equipment and electrical currents that may not be grounded and wires that are not insulated near wet areas. Never use electrical equipment while standing on a wet surface.

- Place floor mats and umbrella stands at all entrances to reduce tracking in water from outside.
- Be sure to wear shoes with slip-resistant soles.
- Report any spills or wet areas that you notice to your supervisor.

Avoiding a Slip

If you are forced to walk through a wet surface, follow these tips to avoid slipping and falling.

- Slow down! Rushing is not worth a serious injury and lost wages.
- Take small steps to keep your balance centered.
- Walk with your feet pointed slightly outward to form a stable base.
- Make wide turns at corners.
- Use handrails if present.
- Concentrate on the surface you are walking on.
- Be prepared for slippery patches.
- Keep your hands out for balance.

Cooperate and Stay Alert

We care about your safety at St. Moritz. If you have any doubt about the safety of the place where you are working, whether it concerns a wet surface or another hazard, talk to your supervisor. It takes the cooperation of our entire team to keep our worksite safe!

Wet weather is both a nuisance and a hazard. Follow these guidelines to keep yourself and your co-workers safe.

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Preventing Winter Slips, Trips and Falls

Now that it has snowed in West Virginia, now is a good time to remind your employees that snow and ice bring an increased risk of slips and falls due to slippery sidewalks, parking lots and working areas. Slips, trips and falls account for about 15% - 20% of all workers' compensation costs.

Important Tips for Winter Safety

Keep adequate supplies of snow and ice removal tools in readily accessible areas.

Shovel and apply ice melt as often as necessary to keep walking areas clean and dry.

Watch for areas where ice tends to form; remove ice accumulations promptly and apply additional ice melt to prevent buildup.

Contract with a snow removal company to keep your parking lots clear of snow and ice (make sure that the contracted company has workers' compensation insurance). Apply ice melt as needed in employee parking lots.

Place high quality, beveled edge mats in walking areas subject to water or snow accumulation. Change mats regularly to ensure those in place are dry and serviceable.

Apply a slip-resistant floor treatment in areas that tend to become wet and slippery. Clean and maintain these floors according to the manufacturer's specifications.

Train Employees to do the Following

Wear shoes or boots that are specifically designed to provide traction on wet, slippery surfaces.

Use walkways that have been salted or shoveled. Discourage taking shortcuts over snow piles.

Take short steps to maintain your center of balance over your feet.

Walk slowly; never run on snow or ice covered surfaces.

When entering and/or exiting vehicles, use the vehicle for support. Never jump from vehicles.

When entering a building, remove snow and water from footwear so as not to create wet, slippery conditions indoors.

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Remember, these warning signs are simply indicators. If you are suspicious of a claim, alert your insurance carrier.

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