

# Town of Windham

## Slips, Trips and Falls Prevention Policy

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### I. Purpose

Pursuant to Title 26: Chapter 6: §561 of Maine State law<sup>1</sup> it is the policy of the Town of Windham to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all employees. Accordingly, this policy provides information and assigns responsibilities for the prevention of injuries caused by slips, trips, and falls.

### II. Scope

This policy applies to all Town of Windham employees.

### III. Facts

Slips, trips, and falls exact a substantial toll deaths, personal injuries and suffering, workers' compensation costs and loss in productivity. On average, workers who are injured as a result of a slip and fall accident spend more days away from work than those who are injured as a result of other causes.

The following list includes examples of common causes of slip, trip, and fall hazards:

Housekeeping and Maintenance Practices:

- Accumulation of clutter and waste
- Improper storage of material and equipment
- Spills
- Extension cords, conduits, cables, and hoses lying across walking surfaces
- Loose and unsecured floor mats, carpets, and coverings
- Damaged or missing flooring materials
- Stairs and ramps with loose or missing handrails
- Inadequate lighting

Walking and Working Surface Conditions:

- Slippery, wet or icy walking surfaces
- Uneven walking surfaces
- Surface changes such as carpet-to-tile or level-to-sloped
- Surface protrusions or depressions such as thresholds, cover plates, and gratings

Work Practices:

- Wearing inappropriate footwear

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<sup>1</sup> **Title 26: Chapter 6: §561.** It is declared the public policy of the State of Maine that workers employed in any occupation shall be protected from hazards to their health or safety and that working conditions shall be maintained that will be reasonably free of hazards to their health and safety.

- Carrying items that obstruct view
- Rushing to complete work

Personal Behavior:

- Wearing improperly fitted, loose or undone footwear
- Cutting through areas not designated or intended as walkways
- Horseplay and running in the workplace
- Not paying attention

#### **IV. Hazard Control**

Engineering Controls. Controls that are engineered into the job are the most effective type of control. They include:

- Redesign of equipment
- Substitution of materials and/or equipment
- Change of process to minimize slips, trips, and falls
- Use of barriers to isolate a hazard
- Use of barriers to isolate a person

Administrative Controls. Changing the way that people do their jobs. These are only effective when people do what they are supposed to do. They include:

- Education and training
- Signage
- Routine inspections of ladders, stairs, walking and working surfaces
- Maintenance
- Good Housekeeping

#### **V. Responsibilities**

Directors and Supervisors:

- Ensure that the Slips, Trips, and Falls Prevention Policy is brought to the attention of those employees that report to them *via* safety talks, team meetings, tailgate sessions, lunch and learns, etc.
- Ensure that the workplace is regularly inspected, and that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed for the risk of slips, trips, and falls within their areas of responsibility regularly and as circumstances change.
- Implement appropriate measures within their control to address slips, trips, and fall hazards.
- Refer actions that are outside their direct controls to others, e.g. to the Town Manager and the Safety Compliance Officer, to ensure that identified hazards can be addressed.
- Ensure that prompt actions are taken to address any potential or identified hazards that may contribute to the occurrence of slips, trips, and fall (i.e. repair any damaged or broken surfaces, clean up spills, mitigate snow and ice on surfaces).

- Work with the Safety Compliance Officer to follow up on all incidents, accidents or near misses associated with slips, trips, and falls.
- Keep records of key activities undertaken to minimize the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls (i.e. cleaning/maintenance schedules such as floor stripping).
- Provide appropriate equipment, work procedures, personal protective equipment and training to protect workers from the risk of slips, trips, and falls (i.e. fall restraint, ladder safety).
- Supervisors and managers<sup>2</sup> are responsible for the enforcement of this policy, and fulfillment of this responsibility is considered in evaluating each supervisor and manager's performance.

#### Employees

- Take actions to eliminate slip, trip, and fall hazards, e.g.:
  - Stay on designed walkways, which have been cleared and maintained.
  - Walk, do not run.
  - Wear proper winter footwear with rubber soles.
- Be vigilant and ensure that any slip, trip, and fall hazards are reported to their supervisors/manager.
- Organize areas of their work environment within their control so as not to introduce slip, trip, and fall hazards (e.g. trailing cables, open drawers, poor housekeeping)
- Always wear personal protective equipment, when needed.
- Exercise caution during wet, slippery conditions and in the use of steps and stairs.
- Report all unsafe work conditions to management and/or the Safety Compliance Officer.

#### Human Resources:

- Assist in the design and delivery of training or other instructional or information sharing mechanisms.
- Assist in the implementation of this policy and development of safe work procedures.
- Ensure the proper reporting/notification of incidents to the Worker's Compensation Insurance Carrier.
- Keep statistics on incidents and injuries to assist in planning prevention strategies, and to communicate information to the Safety Committee, Management, etc.
- Review this policy annually and make changes, as needed.

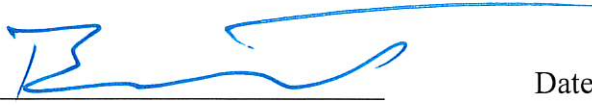
#### Safety Committee:

- Review incident and injury reports to access injury trends with respect to slips, trips, and falls.
- Make recommendations for the development of, or improvements to, existing Slips, Trips, and Falls Prevention Policy (safe work procedures, training, equipment, etc.), as needed.

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<sup>2</sup> "Supervisor" is defined by the criteria set forth in 29 U.S.C. §152(11). Managers are those employees holding the position of department head or higher.

APPROVED:



Date:

9/17/2020

Barry A. Tibbetts

Town Manager

**Outdoor Walking Surfaces:**

Location:	Date:		
<b>"NO" responses indicate areas which should be investigated.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Are parking areas free of potholes, depressions or damaged/uneven surfaces?			
Are curbs in good condition with an even transition to the sidewalk?			
Are wheel stops, curbs, crosswalks and speed bumps well-marked?			
Is slip-resistant paint used for all permanent markings?			
Are wheel stops situated to prevent vehicles from infringing upon walkways?			
In there adequate lighting in parking areas and along walkways?			
Are sidewalks and walkways smooth and even (no raised edges >1/4")?			
Is the ground surface directly next to sidewalks relatively level and free from hidden drop-offs and holes?			
Are walkways free of cords, hoses, large grate openings or other tripping hazards?			
Are open, unpaved and/or grassy areas that are expected to be walked on free from holes and low-laying objects like sprinkler heads and valves?			
Are downspouts and drains oriented to prevent discharge onto walkways?			
Are walkways that are subject to wet or icy conditions coated or designed with a rough, textured finish?			
Are handrails present and in good condition of stairs and ramps?			
Are ramps constructed with slip-resistant materials or treated with traction strips?			
Notes:			

**Indoor Walking Surfaces:**

Location:	Date:		
"NO" responses indicate areas which should be investigated.	YES	NO	N/A
Are walkways free of low-laying objects, especially at blind corners?			
Are floor tiles in good condition with no broken or missing tiles?			
Are grouted floor tiles smooth and even with no lippage > 1/16"?			
Are doorway thresholds beveled and no more than 1/4" high?			
Is carpeting free of ripples, tears and humps?			
Are stair nosings in good condition?			
Do stair nosings have edge treatments or highlighting to increase visibility?			
Is lighting in stairways adequate?			
Are steps in low-light areas, like auditoriums, illuminated at ground level?			
Are utility or drain covers in good condition and even with walkways?			
Are cords and hoses routed away from walkways?			
Are cord covers or tape used whenever cords are placed along walkways?			
Are good housekeeping practices followed, and are they effective in maintaining walkways in an open and clear condition?			
Are walkways free of liquids, oils or other contaminants that could create a slippery condition?			
Have detailed floor maintenance procedures been documented and communicated to employees?			
Have floor maintenance procedures and cleaners been examined to ensure their use doesn't create hazardous, low-traction walking surfaces?			
Are wet floor signs used appropriately and not placed to create a trip hazard?			
Are wet process work areas treated with traction strips, anti-slip coatings or mats designed for wet processes?			
Are entry mats adequate to prevent water and soil from being tracked inside?			
Are mats in good condition, able to clean shoes/boots and absorb water?			
Are indoor mats replaced as needed or dried with a wet vacuum during the date to prevent snow/water infiltration?			

Do mats have slip-resistant backings and lay flat with minimal buckling?			
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Notes:

**Snow/ Ice Management:**

Location:	Date:		
<b>"NO" responses indicate areas which should be investigated.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
If using a snow/ice management contractor, are detailed contracts in place?			
Does contract specify weather triggers and expectations during thaw/refreeze conditions?			
Are walkways and parking areas cleared before people arrive in the morning?			
Are walkways and entrances shoveled throughout the day during snowy conditions?			
Are ice control products applied to effectively manage slip hazards on walkways, especially on north sides of buildings?			
Is black ice controlled with ice melt, sand, oil absorbent compound and/or warning cones?			
Is snow piled to minimize thaw/refreeze problems?			
Notes:			