

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS ARE A PREVENTABLE COST

How RefrigiWear and Proper Footwear Can Help

There are many costs that go into running a business, but one of the highest costs is also one of the most preventable. Injuries caused by slips, trips and falls cost over \$70 Billion dollars each year – with 95 million work days being missed due to slip, trip and fall accidents¹. Yet, with better preparation and policies, many of these accidents could be avoided, saving costs and preventing productivity dips.

By the Numbers

Slips, trips and falls happen in every industry and every job type, but certain positions are more at risk than others, such as laborers, truck drivers and warehouse workers. 55% of falls are because of the walking surface, while 24% are attributed to footwear¹. With 9 million slip, trip and fall injuries occurring each year, a significant cost is passed on to the companies where the accidents occur. There is not only the worker's compensation and medical costs, but lost work days. On average, an employee misses 38 days due to a slip, trip and fall accidents – which can represent a significant dip in productivity for your company in addition to the tangible costs already discussed.

The prevalence of slip, trip and fall incidents represents a major factor in the bottom line of industries where the job demands physical duties. However, with the proper tactics, and investing in the right personal protective equipment, the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls can be dramatically reduced.

Protect Against Accidents

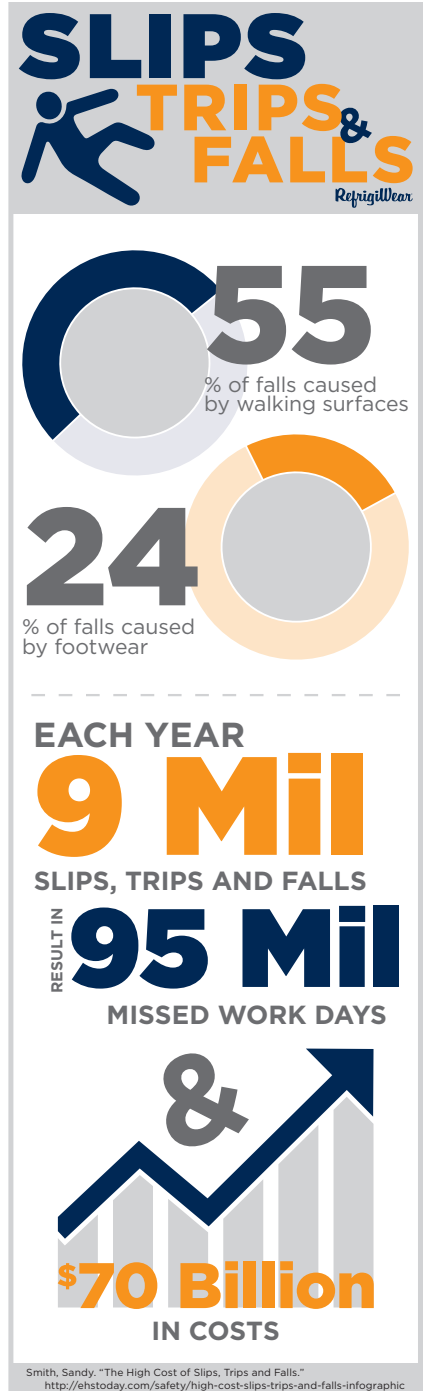
Obviously the biggest preventative measure in preventing slips, trips and falls is keeping the floor hazard free. Quickly handle wet and dry spills, for even dry spills like powder are a risk for slips. Make sure items like boxes, tape and other trip hazards are kept out of walkways. Unfortunately, watching for and handling hazards like spills and other objects won't prevent all accidents. Certain floors, like cement, are slick even when free of spills². Certain environments, such as refrigerated warehouses and freezers, represent a continual hazard for slips because of the way the temperature affects the walking surface. So what can be done to protect against costly accidents in these conditions? Proper footwear.

Considering Footwear Options

A key component of a complete protective outfit, proper footwear is the strongest line of defense against slip, trip and fall accidents. Non-slip soles should be a requirement of all footwear worn in environments prone to hazardous walking conditions. Non-slip soles combine special material with tread in specific designs to allow material to slip through while the soles "grip" the ground.

In cold environments, however, not all outsoles are equal. Materials used to make outsoles for traditional non-slip environments, such as restaurants, will not have the same effectiveness in cold environments. This is because the material hardens, losing the gripping powers, or cracks, allowing hazards to get caught and creating more risk. It is important to use footwear with outsoles specifically designed to perform in even extreme cold temperatures – outsoles that won't harden or crack, so they continue to provide protection against accidents.

Slips, trips and falls will never be completely eradicated as a cost, but steps can be taken to reduce the impact. Though specialized footwear can represent a larger up front investment than other footwear, the savings from workplace accidents they provide is much higher than their additional cost. The better the footwear worn by your employees, the lower the risk of slip, trip and fall accidents and the costs they bring.



1. Smith, Sandy. "The High Cost of Slips, Trips and Falls." <http://ehstoday.com/safety/high-cost-slips-trips-and-falls-infographic>

2. "Slips, Trips & Falls." https://www.osha.gov/dte/grant_materials/fy07/sh-16625-07/slipstripsfalls.ppt