



Incident notification



Alert



Information



Toolbox talk



What is the problem?

For many years slips, trips and falls has been one of the most common causes of injuries at work. According to recent HSE statistics they account for forty percent of all reported major injuries. They also have a tendency to lead to other types of serious incidents such as falls from height.

Within Skanska UK Since the 1st January 2017 across our Infrastructure operating unit alone there has been 109 recorded incidents on OSHENS that have fallen under the title of slips, trips and falls related.

Unfortunately it would appear that this number of incidents is not decreasing. Across all Skanska UK business units there has been a total number of 88 incidents that have occurred since the 1st of January 2019.

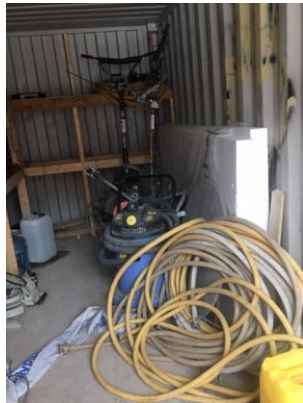
The issue is not only costly to the business both in time of investigations and loss of productivity, but it can also affect morale within teams and affects the injured person both mentally as well as physically.

Examples of areas with increased risks of slips, trips and falls:

Muddy walk way



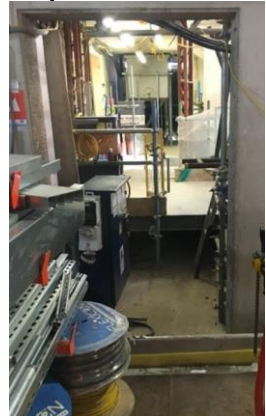
Poor housekeeping



Standing water

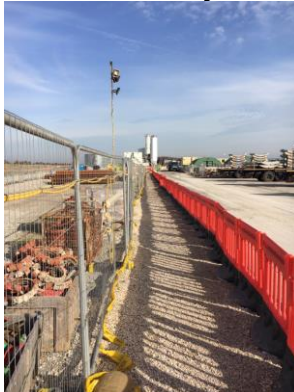


Trip hazards

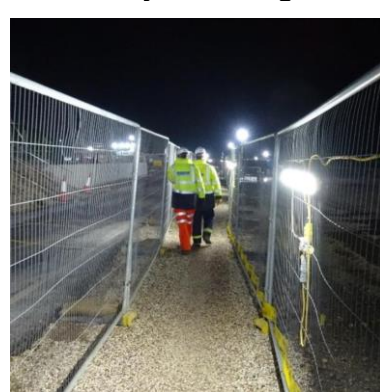


Demonstrated in the photos above are work areas which provide a number of potential hazards that could lead to a slip, trip and fall incident. Below are some simple measures that can be taken to clearly improve an area and reduce the potential of risks from slip, trips and falls.

Stoned walk way



Lit walkway no trailing cables



Access into culvert



Trackway - archaeology



There are some steps at very early stages that can be taken to assist in reducing potential risk;

Plan the works to design out the hazards and identify key areas of risk and set goals for improvement. By designing out the risks in the early stages of the project significantly reduces the hazards associated with slip, trip and falls.

- The first and foremost consideration must be given to walkways and all access and egress routes to and from, in and around the sites.
- Consider all site activities including access to survey points, ground investigations, vegetation clearance, landscaping, access on to verges etc. and remember that project activities and access points are likely to change as work progresses.
- Ensure temporary works are properly designed, inspected and maintained including access scaffold, stairways, access into excavations etc.
- Plan for poor weather conditions such as heavy rain, wind, ice and snow and take appropriate actions.
- The work area and any flooring itself must, where reasonably practicable, be of a condition that minimises the risk of slip, trip and falls whilst the worker is carrying out their duty.
- Plan deliveries to minimize the amount of materials on site and maintain safe access around site.
- Make proper arrangements for the removal of waste from the work area and its proper disposal in a safe and efficient location.
- Plan a system of keeping work and storage areas tidy, include regular site inspections as part of your routine monitoring.
- Where small changes of level cannot be avoided, arrange sound temporary ramps or some other way of providing safe and easy access.
- Work with your employees to identify potential problem areas and set goals for improvement.
- Plan to avoid trailing cables.
- Plan to place materials convenient to the area where they are to be used to reduce the need to carry objects over poor ground.

Control

- Where slip trip and falls cannot be avoided control measures must be introduced to reduce the hazard to a low level.
- A more systematic strategy can help prevent and control these types of incidents.
- Since slip, trip and fall accidents affect all employees on a site; raising awareness of the impact of incidents and involving employees in worksite assessment is considered an effective strategy.
- To raise the awareness, the focus on slip, trip and falls should form part of **every** risk assessment, positive behavioural procedures, daily briefings, and employee consultation processes.
- Tethering of tools and items when working at height near to a leading edge or where there is the potential of fall needs to be adopted. Stop the drop campaigns should be rolled out to increase risk perception.
- Reinforce the need to maintain 3 points of contact when accessing and exiting plant and vehicles through awareness campaigns.

Focus cannot solely rest with the physical measures and environment however and we do need to consider the behaviour of people on site and what drives behaviour either in a positive or negative way.

Human behaviour

- A positive attitude toward health and safety, a 'don't walk by' mentality can reduce the risk of slip and trips accidents e.g. dealing with a spillage, instead of waiting for someone else to deal with it.
- Reinforce this message by the use of company posters, toolbox talks, e-learning
- The type of footwear that is worn and how it is worn can also make a difference e.g. wearing worn soled boots at work will make you more vulnerable to a slip or not lacing your boots up all the way to the top to give you maximum ankle support. Things that prevent you from seeing or thinking about where you are going, can also increase the risk of an accident such as rushing about; carrying large objects; becoming distracted whilst walking for example using a mobile phone.
- A collective responsibility needs to be enforced e.g. excavator drivers should be expected to not just dig a hole in the ground. The surrounding work area should be flat and level where ever possible and the excavator driver must ensure that any spoil excavated from the ground does not create a walking hazard.

Change in level controls

- In every form of construction there has to be an element of deconstruction or temporary works. In most cases this creates a change in level to the working environment. Large changes in level such as deep excavations are usually planned and assessed at design stage but smaller works have usually less forethought and as a result do not consider the risks associated in change of level.
- Highlighting changing levels through paint, coloured tape or signage should be implemented.

Lighting

- Adequate natural and / or artificial lighting must be provided so people can see hazards. Check lighting conditions both inside and outside of the workplace at different times of the day throughout the life of the project.
- A good maintenance system is also essential, as spent lights should be changed as soon as possible.
- Provide workforce with personal lighting such as helmet lamp or torch, but this **should not** be in lieu of task lighting.
- Encourage workers to stop work immediately when lighting is defective / inadequate

Distribution:

EMT/SMT

All OUs/EFs (via Environment Manager or EF lead)

Originating OU only

Action required:

Brief

Display

Information only