

The "C-Change" Initiative:

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



# ***Tool Box Talk***

*Week of July 19th, 2010*

## ***Slip, Trip and Fall Hazard Awareness***

**This is the second in our series of July's Slip Trip and Fall (STF) hazard Safety Tool Box Talks. The goal of this Tool Box Talk is to look at potential slip hazards on JJW projects. After identifying the potential hazards, we will look at specific ways to eliminate them.**

Part of our everyday life involves walking from place to place. Whether it's to the car from the convenience store or through a process unit in a refinery, walking is an incredibly large part of our daily routine. How often do we actually think about which route to take? Human instinct usually gets us there by way of the shortest route which some of the time, is not the safest route. Yet, some people are willing to take a risk just to save a few steps. As we take each step, what challenges face us as we walk to the next destination? This week we will look at slips and ways to eliminate them.

Slips are a result of some a kind of unintended or unexpected change in the contact between the feet and the ground or walking surface.

### **Common causes of slips are:**

- Wet or oily surfaces from rain or occasional spills
- Weather hazards; ice and snow
- Loose, unanchored rugs, mats, smooth flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have same level of traction in all areas
- Poor fitting or worn footwear

### **How can we prevent falls due to slips and trips?**

Studies show that good housekeeping, quality of walking surfaces (flooring), selection of proper footwear, and appropriate pace of walking are all critical elements in the prevention of slips which typically result in a fall. Let's look at these four categories.

Housekeeping is an ongoing challenge on most construction sites. A few of the common hazards we face are cords, leads and welding rod stubs in the walk path, orderly material storage of smaller loose items such as nails, pipe, conduit, or all thread and timely cleanup of spills (oil, water, etc.).

The next level of preventing slip is to look closely at walking surfaces. Recoating or replacing damaged floors or installing mats at doorways. Utilize pressure-sensitive abrasive strips or abrasive-filled paint-on coating on decking can further improve safety and reduce risk of a slip. Several JJW sites currently utilize these methods.

Footwear plays a major part in walking safely. The majority of people, who do a lot of walking, recognize the need for quality footwear with anti-slip or oil resistant properties. Like many things in life, they soon become our favorite and many people resist change for either financial or personal reasons. We then find ourselves with worn soles and very susceptible to a slip whenever they are worn. Since no footwear with anti-slip properties apply to every condition, we must look closely at the task or terrain, and select the appropriate footwear that may be needed.

Now that we have selected the appropriate foot wear, applied anti skid materials to walking surfaces exposed to weather or wet conditions and maintained excellent housekeeping on our job, we can now move freely about the site and not worry about a slip hazard, right? Wrong! Finally we need to look at ourselves. Factors influencing a slip, even under ideal conditions include your personal pace, length of stride and of course, adhering or following those clear, safe, and well lit walkways.

Let's face it, time is money. The faster we can complete a task, the sooner we can start another. It's important to know when we can pick up the pace and when we need to knock it down a notch or two and walking is no different. Adjust your pace to meet the conditions at hand. Wet and potentially slippery conditions warrant a slower pace coupled with a shorter stride. The distance of someone's stride changes the center of gravity of your body over your feet. The further apart or longer your stride, the less stable one becomes. Shorter steps provide greater stability particularly during less than ideal conditions.

As you can see, walking requires constant monitoring of the travel area and continual changes in your actions just to get from one place to another and we do it dozens of times each day. You can also see how one miscalculation, error in judgment or an extended stride to clear a puddle can cause a slip and fall injury. With your brain constantly adjusting for conditions, how distracting do you think it would be to talk on the phone or text while you walk? In short, VERY!

**Next week we will look at identifying trip hazards on the job and ways to eliminate them.**