

Safety Note #135

## PREVENTING ANR SLIP, TRIP, AND FALL INJURIES

Review of University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) workers compensation data indicate about 6% (56 total) of all work-related injuries for fiscal years 1999 – 2008 were the result of slips, trips, and falls. Injuries ranged from fractures to sprains and strains, contusions, and abrasions. This Safety Note discusses causes of ANR slips, trips, and falls and provides information that may be used to reduce or prevent potential injuries.



**Slips:** Approximately 45% of the slip, trip, and fall injuries were due to employees slipping while walking, running, and climbing off or onto equipment or over obstacles such as tree limbs. Surfaces where slip accidents occurred included loose gravel, straw, and paper, wet floors and grass, and those within animal pens and corrals.

**Solutions:** Always be aware of potential slip hazards in the work environment and wear proper personal protective equipment and implement safe practices as follows –

- Plan walking routes to avoid, where possible, wet surfaces or surfaces covered with loose materials.
- Never run in the workplace.
- Wear shoes with non-slip soles when working in areas where slip hazards exist.
- Use handholds and carefully place your feet onto steps or footholds when stepping off or onto equipment or over obstacles.

**Trips:** Nearly 23% of slip, trip, and fall injuries were caused by employees tripping on stairs, over obstacles, and on surfaces.

**Solutions:** Always be aware of possible trip hazards in the workplace and take precautions as follows –

- Always carefully ascend or descend stairs using handrails and looking where to place feet on steps.
- When walking across uneven surfaces such as fields, make the effort to carefully look for holes, furrows, large dirt clots, or other ground obstacles that could cause a footing or trip hazard.
- When planning walking routes, consider and avoid the locations of obstacles such as waste baskets, branches, rocks, and equipment.
- When walking, continually survey the route for unanticipated obstacles and likewise, when carrying an object maintain a clear view of the pathway to avoid trip hazards.

**Falls:** About 32% of the slip, trip, and fall injuries were due to employees falling from ladders, while using furniture and exiting vehicles, and from elevated areas or objects.

**Solutions:** Always maintain a high level of awareness about potential fall hazards in the workplace and take prudent safety actions as follows –

- Use handrails and keep feet in the center of the steps when climbing or descending a ladder.
- Use furniture for its intended purpose. Do not use broken or damaged furniture.
- Look carefully where you will be stepping when exiting a vehicle.
- Never jump from an elevated area. Carefully climb up to or down from elevated areas using handholds and footholds.



For additional slip, trip, and fall information see [Safety Note #62 – Slips, Trips, and Falls](#) and videos E-008, E-071 available from the ANR Environmental Health and Safety Library at <http://safety.ucanr.org>.