



Safety Tips Sheet No. 1: *Slip and Trip Injuries*

This is the first in a series of Safety Tips Sheets developed by the Professional Landcare Network on the four major hazards identified through our OSHA-PLANET Alliance. This Safety Tips Sheet is available in both English and Spanish.

Slips and trips are common in our industry, but preventable

- Landscape crews, professional lawn care crews, and other horticultural employees who work outdoors on wet, muddy and uneven terrain are at high risk of slip and trip injuries.
- Often, these injuries occur at job sites, but they can also occur indoors, especially when “good housekeeping” isn’t a high priority.
- Slips and trips may result in broken bones, sprains, concussions, or other costly and painful injuries. These injuries, however, are *preventable*.

What causes slip and trip injuries

- Running on the job is a major cause of slip and trip injuries.
- These injuries can also occur by not being on the constant lookout for hazards, such as holes in the ground, “bumps” (sticks, stones, partially hidden rocks), or unexpected changes in the terrain.
- Applying fertilizer or other products in light drizzle or working on slippery slopes or when the morning dew is still on the ground can also result in slips and trips. So can wearing the improper footwear or failing to put tools and equipment back where they belong.
- Slippery grass clippings, poor lighting conditions, icy spots in winter, spills, and electrical cords or hoses left in walkways or other job site paths are among the many other contributors to slip and trip injuries.

How to prevent slip and trip injuries

- Pay close attention to conditions. Remember that wet grass can be very slick, and that you need to slow down on muddy or uneven terrain.
- Wear boots (landscape crews) or waterproof shoes or boots (professional lawn care crews) that have good traction.
- Put tools, equipment and materials back where they belong.
- Be especially careful if you are applying liquids.
- Pay close attention if you are carrying a load that may block your view.
- Practice good housekeeping. If you spill something, clean it up. And if you spot a potential tripping hazard, eliminate it if possible or bring it to your crew leader’s attention.