Slip, Trip, Fall: The #3 Non-Fatal Injury Cause and How We Stop It Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Wet and Slippery Surfaces:** Spills, rainwater, snow, or condensation reduce traction instantly, causing sudden foot slips that lead to strains, fractures, or head impacts.
2. **Uneven Walking Areas:** Cracked pavement, potholes, loose gravel, and uneven flooring create unexpected height changes that trigger trips.
3. **Cluttered Pathways:** Tools, hoses, cords, and stored materials block walkways, forcing workers to step around obstacles and increasing trip risk.
4. **Poor Lighting:** Dim or inconsistent lighting hides hazards like steps, cords, and spills, leading to missteps and loss of balance.
5. **Worn Footwear:** Shoes with worn soles or inadequate tread reduce grip, especially on wet, oily, or smooth floors.
6. **Unsecured Ladders and Stairs:** Missing handrails, loose steps, and unstable ladders create fall hazards during climbing or descent.

STATS

- Slips, trips, and falls (STF) remain the #3 leading cause of non-fatal workplace injuries in the US, causing 266,180 days-away cases in 2022 alone (27% of all non-fatal injuries).
- In 2023, STF injuries had the highest median days away from work at 14 days per case – more than amputations or fractures – costing US employers billions annually.
- Same-level falls (slips/trips) accounted for 197,130 injuries in private industry in 2022, while falls to lower level added another 69,050 – together nearly 27% of all lost-time injuries.
- In Canada, STF incidents represent 20–25% of all accepted lost-time claims every year (2020–2024), with an average of 65,000 claims annually across jurisdictions.
- Falls from height remain the #1 cause of traumatic workplace fatalities in both the US (385 deaths in 2023) and Canada (average 45–50 deaths/year), while same-level falls cause zero fatalities but massive disability.
- In Canada, slips, trips, and falls make up about 18% of all lost-time injury claims across provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia (provincial workers’ compensation boards).