SAFETY TALK

Don’t Slip and Slide this Winter

It’s important that workers recognize the hazards of slippery surfaces. Here are helpful hints from winter safety experts that will reduce the risk of falling when slippery conditions exist:

• Wear boots or overshoes with non-slip soles. Avoid shoes that have smooth soles, which increase the risk of slipping.

• Walk consciously. Be alert to the possibility that you could quickly encounter an unseen patch of ice and slip. Avoid the temptation to run to catch a bus or beat traffic when crossing a street.

• Walk cautiously. Your arms help keep you balanced, so keep your hands out of your pockets and avoid carrying heavy loads that may cause you to lose your balance.

• Walk “small.” Avoid having an erect, marching posture. Look to see ahead of where you step. When you step on icy areas, take short, shuffling steps, curl your toes under, and walk as flat-footed as possible. Walk like a penguin!

• Avoid horseplay or other distractions.

• When entering or exiting your vehicles, hold onto the door or side of the vehicle for extra support.

What ideas do you have to improve safety?
• Remove snow immediately before it becomes packed or turns to ice. Keep your porch stoops, steps, ramps, walks, and driveways free of ice by frequently applying ice-melting granules. This is the best way to prevent formation of dangerous ice patches. Using a potassium-based melter such as Safe Step instead of salt will prevent damage to concrete, grass, and other vegetation or to carpets and floors should you track some in.

• Provide non-skid strips or floor mats in slippery or wet areas. Routinely check mats at entrances to ensure they are dry enough to be effective; replace as needed.

• Ensure that workers wear proper footwear for their work environment and conditions.

• Ensure that outside walkways are well lit.