Preventing Winter Slips and Falls

The number and severity of slips and falls increase in the winter months. **While snow falls gently, people don't.** Be on the lookout for these hazardous conditions.

- Slippery surfaces due to water
- Snowy and ice-covered sidewalks or paths
- Freeze/thaw cycles
- Melted snow or ice, or grit at or just inside the entrance of buildings
- Black ice (a thin, nearly invisible coating of ice on paved surfaces caused when temperatures rise above freezing during the day and drop below freezing at night)
- Obstructed sidewalks and roadways
- Packages that are too large or heavy that can affect your balance or obstruct your view
- A hat or scarf that blocks your view or makes it difficult to hear traffic

**Tips**

**Weather**

- Don't get taken by surprise – listen to the weather report and be prepared to slippery conditions. Take your time, pay attention to where you're going and adjust how you walk according to weather conditions. Be a "defensive walker."

**Footwear**

- Wear appropriate winter footwear that is well-insulated, waterproof, has a non-slip, thick sole and a wide, low heel. Ice grippers can also improve walking on ice and snow.

**Parking Lots**

- If you arrive before 8AM or leave late after 6PM, the parking lots and sidewalks may not be cleared yet. Proceed carefully when getting in and out of vehicles.

**Sidewalks and Pathways**

- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If you must walk on the street, walk against the flow of traffic and as close to the curb as possible. Before stepping off a curb, make sure oncoming vehicles have come to a complete stop.
- Walk on cleared, well-lit pathways. Don't take shortcuts or go over snow banks.

**Buildings**

- Check overhead for ice hazards (building roofs, electric lines, etc.). Be especially cautious around building entrances, loading docks and curbs and other areas where ice can form.
- Whenever possible avoid north-facing entrances to buildings as these areas tend to remain icy and slippery longer.
- Wipe your feet before entering a building and before climbing steps. Cold boots or footwear with snow or ice caught on the soles can become quite slippery when you enter a warm building.

Carleton is responsible for providing a safe work environment. Employees and students must be partners with us to improve safety on campus. If a fall or injury occurs or if you spot a hazard:

1. Report hazards immediately to Facilities Management at (507) 222-4133.
2. For employees and student workers, report falls or injuries to your supervisor immediately. Complete an Employee Accident Report Form at http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/human_resources/hr_forms/ and send it to HR immediately.
3. For students, report falls or injuries to Carleton Security Services at (507) 222-4444.

Office of Human Resources, Environmental Health and Safety & Risk Management

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