

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

## Dry cleaning and laundry industry - Slips, trips and falls

### Are slips, trips and falls serious risks in dry cleaners and laundries?

Slips, trips and falls are common in all industries, including the dry cleaning and laundry industries. Although not often thought of as serious, slips, trips and falls in dry cleaners and laundries can often result in serious injury.

For example:

- someone might slip because water or soap has been spilt on the floor and fracture their arm
- someone might fall from a loading bay and receive a serious head injury
- someone might trip down stairs while carrying a large laundry bag and dislocate a shoulder
- someone might trip over laundry left in a walkway and fall onto a hot iron and receive a serious burn.

These are only some examples of how a person might injure themselves if they slip, trip or fall.

### What can be done to prevent slips, trips and falls?

#### To reduce slips in your workplace, consider:

- increasing the slip resistance of flooring, ramps and slopes by:
  - installing slip resistant flooring surfaces and coverings

- applying treatments such as sand-blasting, coatings or acid etching to existing floor surfaces
- repairing leaking equipment, such as washers and dryers to prevent liquids getting onto the floor
- capturing leaking oil or water from machines (e.g. using drip trays or
- installing moisture barriers around the machine)
- using mats at entrances to prevent water being tracked inside on rainy days
- having procedures in place to clean up spills, leaks and waste immediately
- cleaning the floor regularly (perform wet cleaning outside of work hours or dry off surfaces before pedestrian traffic is allowed in the cleaned area)
- providing workers with appropriate footwear.

#### Trips can be minimised by:

- clearly marking walkways and ensuring laundry, equipment and waste are not put in these areas
- providing enough storage to keep laundry, equipment and waste out of walkways and work areas
- electrical leads and air hoses should be placed overhead to keep them off the floor
- hardwire equipment in to minimise electrical leads on the floor
- ensuring damaged floors and walkways are repaired
- using ramps instead of steps where floor levels change

- ensure adequate lighting
- painting the edges of large pieces of equipment in a bright colour for higher visibility.

**Reducing injuries from falls can be done by:**

- placing covers over or railings around any pits where people may be able to fall in
- fitting railings to mezzanine floors and raised storage areas
- ensuring that people working from a ladder have three points of contact or a stable object at all times and securing the ladder to prevent movement
- maintaining equipment, such as ladders, to prevent failure

- providing anti-slip surfaces on steps and rungs
- ensuring people wear footwear with adequate slip resistance, suitable for their work and the environment
- providing adequate lighting so people can move around and do their jobs safely (e.g. consider brightness, glare, shadows, etc.).

For more information on slips, trips and falls and general obligations workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit [www.worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au)

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