

Cafe and restaurant industry

Slips, trips and falls

A common cause of injury in the cafe and restaurant industry is slips, trips and falls. These are generally due to poor housekeeping practices in the workplace such as water or oil spilt on the floor. Materials placed untidily or using passageways for storage can also cause slips, trips or falls.

When assessing the potential for slips, trips and falls on your existing surfaces, make sure you look at out of sight areas such as freezers, cool and storage rooms, loading docks and behind bars. You might consider the following solutions.

Possible solutions

Prevent grease and water from lying on floors

- Drainage to prevent pooling of water and grease.
- Provide umbrella and coat stands/cloak rooms to prevent water dripping across floors.
- Minimise the need to carry full pots or pans, so there are fewer spills.
- Introduce a spill procedure that requires immediate mopping up of all spills followed by a 'dry mop' to ensure the surface is not left wet.
- Avoid walking on slippery floors.

Make floors more slip resistant

- Methods to improve slip resistance, such as acid etching, application of adhesive strips and slip-resistant paint. The best method will depend on your existing floor surface. AS 3361.2 is a good reference for this. You may decide to replace floor surfaces with a non-slip material.
- Use floor cleaning products that remove oil and grease. Agree on written standards with contract cleaners to ensure that polishes/cleaning agents leave the floor in a non-slip condition.

Limit unnecessary traffic through work areas

- Minimise the number of people who have to walk through kitchen areas (e.g. limit customer service staff to front of house, have a window between kitchen and front of house so staff can communicate with each other instead of going into the kitchen area).

See and avoid obstacles

- Use storage areas so that equipment doesn't have to be stored in walkways. Alert employees to the dangers of unsafe practices such as leaving boxes, rubbish, bags and furniture in passageways, entrances and exits.
- Use ramps instead of steps.
- Don't drape electrical leads across the floor.
- Provide adequate lighting.

For more information on workplace health and safety issues visit www.dir.qld.gov.au

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