

Slips and Trips - Electrical Cords

Slips and trips are one of the leading causes of workplace injuries in construction. They may seem minor, but they can result in serious injuries like broken bones, sprains, or even head trauma. One of the most overlooked causes of trips on construction sites is **electrical cords**.

Common Trip Hazards on Site

- Loose electrical cords or air hoses running across walkways.
- Poorly lit work areas.
- Uneven surfaces, debris, or tools left on the ground.
- Wet or slippery surfaces from spills or rain.

Focus: Electrical Cords and Leads

Why they're dangerous:

- Workers often don't see them, especially in low light or cluttered areas.
- They move as tools are used, creating unpredictable hazards.
- They can get tangled with feet or equipment, causing sudden trips.

Common Mistakes:

- Running cords across high-traffic areas.
- Not using proper cord covers or cable ramps.
- Using damaged cords that are harder to see or lay unevenly.

Best Practices to Prevent Trips from Cords

1. Plan the Layout

- Keep cords out of walkways and high-traffic areas whenever possible.
- Use wall-mounted outlets or overhead drops instead of dragging cords across the floor.

2. Secure Cords

- Use **cord covers**, **floor cable protectors**, or **tape** to secure cords that must cross walkways.
- Avoid using duct tape that can peel off and create more hazards.

3. Inspect Daily

- Check all cords for wear, fraying, or damage.
- Replace or remove damaged cords immediately.

4. Keep It Tidy

- Coil unused lengths of cord to prevent bunching.
- Avoid leaving cords lying across muddy or wet areas, which makes them harder to see.

5. Use Cord Reels and Management Systems

- Use retractable reels or cord organizers to keep cords off the floor when not in use.

6. Educate and Communicate

- Make sure all workers understand the hazards and report any poorly placed or damaged cords.
- Use clear signage where cords must be run across walkways.

What to Do If You See a Trip Hazard

- **Don't ignore it.** Fix it immediately or report it to your supervisor.
- **Warn others.** Use cones or barriers until the hazard is removed.
- **Document it.** Record the near miss if it could have caused an injury.

Discussion Points

- Have you seen or experienced a trip related to electrical cords on site?
- What methods are currently in place to manage cords here?
- Are there any improvements we could make?

Let's work together to eliminate these preventable hazards. One simple change—like properly routing and securing cords—can prevent a serious injury.