

Walking and Working Surface Safety

Purpose

This program provides the minimum safety requirements for protecting employees from potential injuries associated from slips, trips and falls at 4 feet or greater or overhead falls and to ensure that the University's walking and working surface policy is successfully and consistently implemented.

- A. **Walking and Working Surfaces:** Personal injuries result from slipping, tripping, or falling caused by poor housekeeping, insufficient lighting, poor maintenance, slippery or uneven surfaces, inattention to tasks, running, failure to use safety equipment, and fatigue.
- B. **Guardrails:** Lack of guardrails may result in personnel falling over the edge of platforms, stairs, and into pits. In addition, personnel can be struck by objects falling from overhead openings, platforms, and walkways.

Scope

This program applies to all locations establishes appropriate procedures, corrective measures, and protective measures related to walking and working surfaces in the workplace. It does not cover ladders, scaffolding, or fall protection, which are discussed in separate programs.

Responsibilities

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Responsibilities

- A. Developing the Walking and Working Surface Program and revising the Program as appropriate
- B. Inspecting walking and working surfaces for appropriate guarding and conditions as needed or upon request, and reporting any hazardous conditions to the appropriate department(s)
- C. Assisting departments with the selection of proper walking/working surface guarding upon request
- D. Investigating injuries related to walking and working surfaces.

Departmental Responsibilities

- A. Ensuring employees are aware of walking and working surface hazards appropriate to their assigned task
- B. Ensuring employees are provided with and use appropriate personal protective equipment and materials
- C. Ensuring that machines and equipment are maintained in a manner that eliminates conditions that may result in a slip, trip, or fall.

Employees Responsibilities

- A. Recognizing when a slip, trip, or fall hazard is present
- B. Reporting hazards to their supervisor or other responsible department
- C. Following appropriate safe work practices, including properly wearing all necessary personal protective equipment
- D. Reporting lighting deficiencies to the Work Control or to Building Services for the respective campus
- E. Maintaining their immediate work areas in a clean and orderly manner and free of known hazards
- F. Notifying maintenance of hazardous conditions beyond their control
- G. Ensuring that aisles are kept clean, free of material, scrap, or any type of debris

Facilities Design and Construction

- A. Designing and ensuring proper installation of protection systems related to walking and working surfaces
- B. OSHA 1910.23 covers the specifications for walking and working surfaces. These specifications need to be consulted and incorporated into project design for renovations and new projects.

Protective Devices and Control of Hazards

Prevention consists of proper maintenance, good housekeeping, such as prompt cleanup of liquid spills, and appropriate guards for floor and wall openings.

Illumination

Proper illumination of workspaces, project sites, and hallways prevents slips, trips, and falls. The lighting standards provided in this section are minimal standards.

A. Minimum Lighting Requirements

Facility or Function	Foot Candles (lm/ft²)
Storage areas, loading docks	3
General indoor areas	5
Workrooms, shops, equipment rooms	10
Offices, meeting rooms, infirmaries	50

B. Aisles and passageways

1. Aisles should be at least 36 inches wide to permit free movement of workers and equipment. Where material-handling equipment is used, allow enough clearance to permit safe vehicle turns. A safe clearance is at least three feet wider than the widest vehicle used.
2. Where required, permanent aisles and passageways shall be appropriately marked
3. Aisles and passageways shall be kept clear and in good repairs, with no obstruction across or in aisles that could create a hazard.
4. Aisles and passageways shall follow WCU Emergency Egress Policy and WCU Fire Prevention and Protection Policy

Electrical Cords

- A. Permanent electrical cords must be managed to prevent them from crossing walkways and footpaths.
- B. Temporary cords for equipment that must run across footpaths shall be secured flat against the ground with gaffers' tape when possible or covered using cable protectors or cable ramps when taping is not practical, such as when temporary cables must cross

sidewalks or outdoor walkways or in the case of large diameter cables. In all cases, temporary cables must be removed from walkways and footpaths as soon as possible upon completion of the project or event that prompted their use.

Machines and Equipment

Crowding must be avoided wherever possible. Equipment and machinery will be arranged to permit an even flow of materials. Sufficient space should be provided to handle the material with the least possible interference from or to workers or other work being performed. Machine positioning should allow for easy maintenance, cleaning, and removal of scrap.

Housekeeping

A. General work areas

1. All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean, orderly, sanitary, and free of known hazards.
2. Maintain clean workroom floors and, so far as possible, a dry condition. Where wet processes are used, drainage shall be maintained, and false floors, platforms, mats, or other dry standing places will be provided where practicable.
3. Every floor, working place, and passageway shall be kept free from protruding nails, splinters, holes, or loose boards.

B. Spills

1. Spills of non-hazardous materials need to be cleaned up immediately by the employee responsible for such or reported immediately to Work Control or to Building Services for the respective campus. If the spill cannot be removed immediately, then warning signs or barricades sufficient to warn personnel shall be placed at the spill site.

C. Report Hazardous Materials spills immediately to Public Safety.

1. Provide as much information as possible

D. Outside areas

1. Maintain grounds free of debris

2. Clear walkways of snow/ice, and of obstacles that block the right of way or present slipping and tripping hazards
3. Abrasive materials may be used on walk surfaces when it is impractical or impossible to remove snow and ice

Fall Protection

E. Unprotected sides and edges

1. Employees on a work surface with an unprotected side or edge which is 4 feet or more above a lower level shall be protected from falling by the use of a guardrail system or personal fall restraint or arrest system.

F. Holes and excavations

1. Floor openings, holes, manholes, roof hatches, and skylights. Employees on a work surface where floor openings, holes, manholes, roof hatches and skylights present fall hazards of 4 feet or more shall be protected from falling by guardrail systems erected around the hole, covers over the openings, or by personal fall arrest systems.

Training & Recordkeeping

- A. A formal training is not required for this Program; however, all supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees understand and recognize general walking and working surface hazards in their work area. This includes:
 1. A description the specific hazards associated with walking and working surfaces and guards
 2. Safeguards to mitigate that hazard
 3. Contact the supervisor if a safeguard is damaged or missing

References

1. 29 CFR 1910.21, Definitions, Walking-Working Surfaces
2. 29 CFR 1910.22, General Requirements
3. 29 CFR 1910.23, Guarding Floor and Wall Openings and Holes
4. West Chester University Emergency Egress Policy
5. West Chester University Fire Prevention and Protection Policy
6. West Chester University Fall Protection Policy (draft)