

## **Walking on Wet and Otherwise Slippery Surfaces**

Walking to and from the parking lot or between work buildings requires special attention to avoid slipping and falling, both during wet weather conditions and when items such as flower petals, leaves, etc., are on the ground. It is important for everyone to be constantly aware of these hazards and to learn to walk safely on slippery surfaces.

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind to avoid slips, trips, and falls on slippery surfaces:

- During wet weather, avoid boots or shoes with smooth soles and heels; instead, wear shoes or boots that provide traction.
- On cooler days, approach pavement with caution; assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and maybe even frosty or icy.
- Walk in designated walkways as much as possible; taking shortcuts over wet areas can be hazardous. Look ahead when you walk; a frost-covered sidewalk or driveway may require travel along the grassy edge for traction.
- If you must carry a load, try not to carry too much; keep your hands and arms free to balance yourself.
- Keep your hands out of your pockets; this will lower your center of gravity and increase your balance.
- Watch where you step and go slowly to help your reaction time to changes in traction.
- When walking on steps use available hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.
- Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles; use the vehicle for support.
- Take short steps for stability; it also helps to stop occasionally to break your momentum.
- When entering buildings on a wet day, remove as much water from your shoes as possible; water on the floor can lead to slippery indoor conditions.
- Walk carefully near outer doors.

## **Slippery Roads**

Many road pavements are the most slippery when it first starts to rain, or snow for those of you living in the foothills. This is due to oil and dust that have accumulated on the pavement surface. Slow down at the first sign of rain, drizzle, or snow on the road, especially after a dry spell. A slippery road will not give your tires the grip they need. Drive more slowly than you would on a dry road. These are some clues to help you spot slippery roads:

- On cold, wet days, shade from trees or buildings can hide spots of ice; these areas freeze first and dry out last.
- Bridges and overpasses tend to freeze before the rest of the road does; they can hide spots of ice.
- If it starts to rain on a warm day, the pavement can be very slippery for the first several minutes. Heat causes oil in the asphalt to come to the surface. The oil makes the road very slippery until the rain washes the oil off the surface of the road.

A road that is normally safe can become dangerous when it is slippery. If you start to skid:

- Ease off the gas pedal.
- Stop braking.
- Turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid.

To prevent skidding on slippery surfaces:

- Drive slowly and stay farther behind the vehicle ahead of you.
- Slow down as you approach curves and intersections.
- Avoid fast turns.
- Avoid quick stops.
- Shift to low gear before going down a steep hill.
- Avoid especially slippery areas, such as ice patches, wet leaves, oil, or deep puddles.

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