



Division of Risk Management

Slips, Trips, and Falls Tip Sheet

Did you know that slips, trips, and falls are a leading cause of injury at state buildings? The most common cause of these accidents are wet/slippery surfaces and excessive changes in elevation (raised concrete edges, curled rugs, electrical cords, and more). Because they are so common, we've compiled this sheet with some tips that will help you combat slip, trip, and fall type losses.

Wet Surfaces

Wet shoes on solid surfaces on rainy and snowy days are dangerous. Quickly cleaning up of wet floors and spills is the most effective form of injury reduction. Here are a few tips to help reduce injuries and possible liability claims.

Have Walk-Off Mats Inside—Standard industry practice recommends walk-off mats approximately 15-25 feet long, depending on the building's layout. These mats play a crucial role in preventing slips, trips, and falls by allowing each foot to contact the mats numerous times, or at least 3-8 times (with roughly every three feet per stride).

Have Exterior Mats—To catch debris and moisture before entering the building.

Have Emergency Response Carts—At a minimum, the carts should contain mops, towels, and other water absorbent items, as well as oil-absorbents for other spill types.

Use Floor Drying Fans when Necessary to Speed Up Evaporation—But be careful that you do not create a tripping hazard with the cord placement.

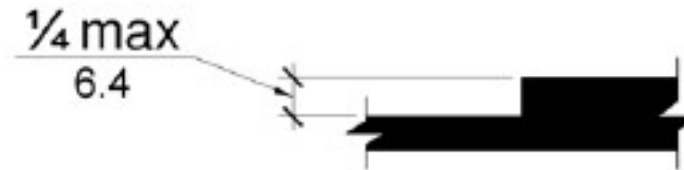
Use Slippery When Wet Signs—These signs should not be placed on the carpet because they direct people to walk on the slippery surface. Signs should be stored near areas of common concern to allow for quick access.



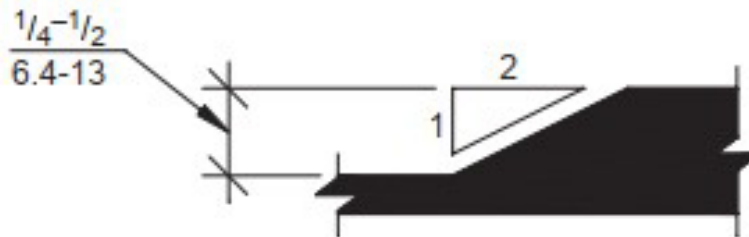
Changes in Elevation

Excessive changes in elevation are a prevalent cause of injuries and liability claims against the State of Utah. Standard industry practice utilizes the requirements of the ADAAG (Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines) (Standards for Accessible Design) to check for accessibility compliance.

Changes in Elevations Up to 1/4 Inch are Permitted to be Vertical.



Changes in Elevations Between 1/4 Inch and 1/2 Inch MUST be Mitigated Through Slow Beveling—Provided at a Rate Not to Exceed 1:2 (Rise:Run).



Changes in Elevations Greater than 1/2 Inch Require the Installation of a Ramp.

The above-listed requirements were established to help people with mobility devices gain access to or from buildings/facilities; they do not explicitly address the maintenance of the lips for general safety. However, in the context of general liability, lips greater than 1/4 inch are generally considered tripping hazards that should be identified and properly repaired or mitigated.

1. Identify and number all raised edges/lips greater than 1/4 inch; numerous third-party organizations specialize in this work.
2. Paint all lips with high-visibility paint until appropriate work can be performed. Paint should be anti-slip or approved for use on walkways.
3. Create a mitigation plan to address edges and lips, working from the biggest to the smallest.
4. Records should be maintained for the work to be performed and conducted.
5. Weekly walks on all walking surfaces are needed to identify new hazards. Note that changes in weather patterns (excessive cold, moisture, heat, etc.) can rapidly create new lips.
6. At a minimum, annual work should be performed to eliminate the edges/lips.
7. Other hazards: Cords, rugs, carpets, etc., that present a tripping hazard need to be properly mitigated through cord protectors, rug/carpet repair, or removal.