

Supporting Department: Human Resources and Environment, Health and Safety
Issued/Reviewed: November 2011

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

The Brock University Occupational Health & Safety Policy states: *“Brock University is committed to the prevention of illness and injury through the provision and maintenance of healthy and safe conditions throughout its premises and activities. The University endeavors to provide a hazard-free environment and minimize risks by adherence to all relevant legislation and, where appropriate, through the development and implementation of additional internal standards, programs and procedures”.*

Injuries resulting from Slips, Trips and/or Falls (STF) are among those most commonly reported by employees, students and guests at Brock. This is consistent with provincial statistics from the WSIB, which show 1 in 5 Lost Time Injuries in Ontario result from a STF.

STFs occur due to a loss of balance or instability potentially created by a number of factors, including the environment. With more than 20,000 people traveling the University’s 31 acres of parking, 11 km of walkways and 35,000 sq m of hallway daily, the prevention of slips, trips and falls presents both a challenge and a need -- thus a risk-specific program is warranted.

The Slip Trip and Fall Prevention Program outlines a framework to prevent related injuries at Brock by defining roles, responsibilities, general control strategies, communication and training basics, and an evaluation and review process. Support documentation for the program includes STF Guidelines, checklists and other tools for the Brock community to utilize as needed to address and manage STF risks in their own area, work and tasks.

The program recognizes that slips, trips and falls can occur anywhere. Many associated risks can be influenced by individuals themselves, or those travelling or working in an area, regardless if the risk is perceived as being specifically managed by one department. Therefore, safety and prevention needs to begin with the individual.

2.0 Scope

The Program applies to all members of the University community, as defined in the Brock Occupational Health and Safety Policy, e.g. employees, students, contractors, volunteers and visitors.

Definitions:

Slip: A sudden sliding motion when the foot (or shoe) loses traction with the walking surface potentially resulting in a loss of balance.

Trip: Temporary instability generated when the movement of the foot is momentarily interrupted.

Fall: An instantaneous drop in height of the human body.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities/Expectations

- The **Brock Community, including students and visitors**, are expected to recognize, prevent and control STF hazards for themselves and others by:
 - Avoiding short cuts - taking properly marked, cleared and illuminated routes
 - Matching pace, attention (don’t text and walk!) and footwear to the environment and conditions
 - Ensuring any spills they create or discover are properly addressed by reporting, de-marking and/or cleaning up immediately
 - Avoiding and eliminating tripping hazards
 - Maintaining safe access and egress along hallways, aisles and paths
 - Reporting any STF hazards or incidents to a Brock employee

- All **employees** are expected to:
 - Recognize the circumstances and environments that contribute to STF hazards
 - Prevent the creation of STF hazards and protect themselves by adhering to safe work practices
 - Keep work areas and travel routes free from slip, trip and fall hazards
 - Participate in and apply training, where warranted
 - Use equipment and clothing provided or required, e.g. personal apparel and fall protection equipment
 - Report all potential/actual STF hazards beyond one's ability to resolve to a Supervisor
 - Report any injuries or close calls using the Brock University Injury/Incident form
 - Participate in timely Health Management strategies including early and safe return to work

Supervisors/Managers are expected to take all reasonable precautions to control STF hazards and to:

- Recognize and prevent/address STF hazards in the area and work they oversee
 - Inform/educate/train employees to recognize and prevent STF hazards and injuries
 - Develop and implement written procedures to communicate safe work practices as warranted, e.g. equipment, apparel, activity and environmental expectations. Monitor for compliance.
 - Provide employees with proper equipment in good condition to safely execute tasks
 - Encourage reporting of all hazards, any incidents as well as requests for assistance
 - Conduct hazard/incident investigation for root cause and prevention
 - Facilitate timely Health Management strategies including early and safe return to work
 - Review department/unit's success in STF injury prevention annually, and change internal practices and procedures as warranted
 - Keep and maintain records and/or documentation on operation or area safety, e.g. training, incidents, inspections and equipment logs
- **Building/Area Managers** are expected to:
 - Recognize and prevent/address STF hazards in the area they oversee
 - Ensure any occupants, contractors or vendors do not create STF hazards in the course of operations
 - Expeditiously communicate facility issues to FM, working jointly to facilitate resolution
 - Communicate local STF challenges to building occupants
 - Manage activities and pedestrian flow in building/area to minimize STF and access/egress risks
 - **Facilities Management** is expected to:
 - Design, construct and maintain walking surfaces in a manner that minimizes slips, trips and falls
 - Organize, advertise, and support FM Customer Service for timely reporting and response to hazards
 - Communicate facility challenges, particularly hazardous conditions, to Brock Community as warranted
 - Manage facilities, resources and communication in response to adverse weather to support the Inclement Weather Policy and in keeping with FM Snow and Ice Control Guidelines
 - Keep and maintain associated records and/or documentation
 - **Parking Services (in conjunction with Facilities Management)** is expected to:
 - Clearly mark and manage access to lots, walkways and laneways to promote safe pedestrian transit
 - Ensure parking lots are kept in safe condition and organize maintenance where warranted
 - Conduct inspections and/or risk assessments to ensure the safe use of parking facilities
 - Respond to all claims about the safety of parking lots in a timely manner
 - Reassign parking lots for use in inclement weather when lots need to be cleared
 - Keep and maintain associated records and/or documentation
 - **Campus Security Services** is expected to:
 - Organize and support Campus Security Customer Service for timely reporting and response to hazards, especially after normal business hours
 - Control hazards by taking immediate interim action (e.g. barricading or taping off an area)
 - Conduct routine assessments of indoor and outdoor surface conditions for STF hazards, especially after normal business hours
 - Communicate with and call in appropriate FM resources to control identified STF hazards as warranted

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- Manage resources and communication in response to adverse weather to support the Inclement Weather Policy
- Keep and maintain associated records and/or documentation
- **Human Resources & Environment Health & Safety** will develop, support and coordinate the Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention Program and will:
 - Communicate the Program and any applicable general STF guidelines and tools
 - Raise awareness of individual and environmental STF prevention strategies throughout the Brock community
 - Organize, deliver and/or support employee and supervisor training for general and individual application of the Program
 - Guide, facilitate and/or support University departments in their STF Prevention and other OHS responsibilities, e.g. assistance with procedures
 - Coordinate STF critical and significant incident investigation to determine root cause
 - Collect and analyze injury/incident/hazard data to identify trends
 - Review root causes and trends with stakeholders to develop prevention strategies and support continuous program improvement
 - Organize timely Health Management strategies including early and safe return to work or school
 - Facilitate and support the Joint Health and Safety Committee in STF prevention including data/trend, inspection, training and program review
 - Keep and maintain associated records and/or documentation

5.0 General Risk Management Guidelines for Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards

RECOGNITION:

- Indoor STF hazards:**
- Floor contaminants (e.g. dirt, dust, papers, waste, etc.),
 - Liquids from spills, cleaning, snow and ice
 - Stored materials obstructing corridors, walkways and work areas,
 - Floor structure damage (i.e. cracks, rough surfaces)
 - Sudden change in height or surface friction
 - Limited visibility masking any of the above
- Outdoor STF hazards:**
- Damaged parking lot and walkway surfaces (e.g. potholes, frost heaves, cracks, bumps, depressions, etc.)
 - Accumulation of snow. Ice, water or debris
 - Limited visibility masking any of the above
- Personal STF hazards:**
- Inappropriate footwear for the environment, task, pace and/or conditions
 - Carrying large objects obstructing vision and limiting hand guarding
 - Rushing or travelling too quickly for the surface, environment or footwear conditions
 - Inattention (e.g. texting!) or misjudging a stair, step or surface change
 - Short cuts through non-pedestrian areas e.g. snow banks and construction areas
 - Failing to modify pace or wear appropriate glasses to address vision challenges

REPORTING FOR ASSESSMENT:

- Reporting STF hazards:**
- Notify Supervisor of hazards that affect work
 - Contact FM Custodial Services (X3508) on Indoor STF Hazards
 - Contact FM Grounds/Customer Service (X3717) on Outdoor STF Hazards
 - Contact Campus Security Services (X3200 emergency line) for urgent STF hazards found outside of regular business hours
 - Submit an "Slip, Trip and Fall Hazard Report" to HR/EHS and responsible personnel for non-urgent risks
 - Complete and submit an Injury/Incident Form to report all falls or close-calls

CONTROLS:

“At the Source”:

- Remove potential tripping hazards (e.g. litter, backpacks, computer cords across a walkway)
- Maintain surfaces free of potential slip, trip and falls hazards
- Design/Install engineered walkways to prevent the accumulation of snow, ice or water, e.g. with shelter, heat or graded for drainage
- Repair water leaks/run-off/puddling impacting pedestrian routes
- Thoroughly brush snow and ice from boots and pants before entering a building

“Along the Path”:

- Barricade/mark areas where STF hazards identified (e.g. a large spill or sidewalk under repair)
- Provide direction to alternative safe routes of travel.
- Mats at entrances to absorb water and debris tracked in by pedestrians

“At the Person”:

- Pedestrian awareness and education campaigns on STF recognition and avoidance
- Avoid areas where slip, trip and falls hazards have been identified (e.g. construction or repairs occurring)
- Use signs/pylons/caution tape to warn pedestrians to avoid or be aware of floor conditions
- Personal apparel and behaviour modification with respect to pace, load, vision, attention and footwear.
- Report hazards and incidents for future prevention

7.0 Communication

- HR/EHS will develop and implement community awareness campaigns on recognizing STF hazards, especially for the winter season.
- Supervisors will review the program and discuss the risks in the context of their operations, work practices and area
- Workers will communicate STF concerns and any incidents to their Supervisor
- Expectations of the program will be communicated to students, visitors and the community by the liaising University stakeholder as appropriate

8.0 Training

- HR/EHS will develop and implement general STF Prevention education, plus Supervisor training on investigation strategies and implementing effective controls
- Department Supervisor/Manager will:
 - Arrange and record employee attendance at general STF Prevention training
 - Instruct and train employees on any local STF standards or procedures.

9.0 Evaluation and Continuous Improvements

- HR/EHS will review reported slip, trip and fall incidents, analyze trends and facilitate affected stakeholders with targeted actions to prevent the reoccurrence of slip, trip and falls incidents.
- Supervisor/Manager will review incidents affecting or related to departmental operations, plus procedures and performance to identify trends, gaps and actions for improvement
- The JHSC will review incident trends on a routine basis during their regularly scheduled meetings and will make recommendations as warranted.



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10.0 Applicable Legislation

Ontario Occupational Health & Safety Act, Regulation 851, Industrial Establishments, sections 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20 (Premises), 21 (Lighting)

11. A floor or other surface used by any worker shall,
- (a) Be kept free of,
 - (i) Obstructions,
 - (ii) Hazards, and
 - (iii) Accumulations of refuse, snow or ice; and
 - (b) Not have any finish or protective material used on it that is likely to make the surface slippery.
R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 851, s. 11.
15. A cover on an opening in a floor, roof or other surface shall be,
- (a) Secured in place; and
 - (b) Constructed to meet the structural requirements for loads due to the use of floors and roofs as set out in the Building Code. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 851, s. 15.
21. Where natural lighting is inadequate to ensure the safety of any worker, artificial lighting shall be provided and shadows and glare shall be reduced to a minimum. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 851, s. 21.

Occupier's Liability Act R.S.O. 1990 c. 0.2

Occupier's duty

[3.\(1\)](#) An occupier of premises owes a duty to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that persons entering on the premises, and the property brought on the premises by those persons are reasonably safe while on the premises.

Idem

[\(2\)](#) The duty of care provided for in subsection (1) applies whether the danger is caused by the condition of the premises or by an activity carried out on the premises.

11.0 Supporting Documents

- Brock University's Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Brock University Injury/Incident Report Form
- Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention Guidelines