

# Safety Short

## Stand Up to Winter



It's here again, WINTER – snow, sleet, ice, freezing rain and again this year, too many of us will fall and be injured. We don't have to; “stand up to winter” by following these suggestions:

- Take small careful steps. Be aware of changes in conditions or of walking surfaces.
- Use handrails and any solid, stationary object that will support you.
- Wear proper footwear for the conditions. Use ice cleats when possible. Carry “inside footwear” and change when you are inside.
- Stay on designated walkways and paths; don't take shortcuts across areas that are not cleared of snow and ice.
- Don't carry large items while on snow or ice. If you must - shovel, sand, and salt first. Make sure you can see where you are going.
- Wear gloves; don't walk with your hands in your pockets. Keep your hands available to maintain balance and to protect yourself if you fall.
- In addition to the precautions listed above that all of us can do, there are administrative controls that should be implemented:

- Establish a plan for removal of snow and for salting and sanding of driveways, parking lots and pedestrian travel ways. Identify high hazard areas, assign responsibility, and monitor conditions.



- If all entrances cannot be cleared before employees arrive, designate an entrance to be cleared for use by first arriving employees and require employees to use it.
- Place containers of sand/salt near entrances and encourage employees to use it when they identify an area as unsafe.
- Protect entrances and lobbies with matting that absorbs water. Inspect entrance mats frequently throughout the day. Clean up water, dirt, and salt from snow melt and post caution signs to remind employees of wet floors.
- Train employees to recognize slip and fall hazards and how to prevent falls. Provide newsletters, posters, and verbal reminders. Get employees involved in developing your “winter plan.”



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## Preventative Steps for next Winter:

- Make note of areas that are high risk or habitual problems. Example – a section of walkway that gets slippery every time there is melting followed by freezing temperatures. Investigate ways to “engineer out” the hazard by rerouting drainage, raising the walkway, or relocating the travel path or by other means.
- Always be aware of the condition of the walking and working surfaces when you are about to exit your vehicle.
- Use three points of contact when exiting a vehicle or a piece of equipment.
- Provide non-slip footwear to designated employees such as police, fire, public works, and custodians. MMA members that participate in the Worker’s Compensation Fund should consider submitting for the MMA Safety Enhancement Grant.

*Stand up to winter –*

*Don’t Fall!!*