

HEALTH AND SAFETY BULLETIN

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PURPOSE

In this Bulletin we cover three incidents which all resulted in injuries occurring on client sites due to slipping on icy surfaces. **Category: Slips, Trips and Falls**

Action

Review your sites' snow & ice gritting and removal plans to ensure they are up-to-date and fully implemented.

Incident 1 - Slip/Fall on ice caused by dripping aircon condenser

What/Where: client employee slipped and fell while exiting the main entrance doors to the admin block resulting in minor bruising (not first alert but was considered as a potential lost-time).

Causes:

- Leaking of condenser fan on pavement caused it to be wet. As the area is sheltered and the water froze over which made it slippery.
- The site ice/snow removal email trigger arrangement was insufficient (timeline not respected).
- Grit was not sufficient to mitigate risk of slip and fall.
- Snow/Ice removal did not take place despite request by Facilities.
- There was no inspection regime to confirm completion of works as regards gritting/snow/ice removal.



Lessons Learned:

- Importance of reviewing and updating ice/snow removal plan including SLAs and response time.
- Contractor updates of ice/snow removal trigger plan based on weather arrangement and frequency should be consistent.
- Importance of an inspection regime (before and after) to inspect all priority areas (re. site gritting plan) before the day has begun & ensure enough grit is being put down in preparation for weather changes.
- Understanding of hazards caused by water drainage onsite including drainage of dispensed water from the condenser fan (and may include other drainage points and potential leaks such as roof drainage)

Incident 2 - Slip/Fall on ice caused by site not being gritted

What/Where: A client employee slipped in the car park on a slippery and icy outdoor surface due to low temperatures. The injured person hurt their leg and called in sick the next day due to pain.

Causes:

- The site had not been gritted recently, and it was not on the contractor's active gritting list.

Lessons Learned:

- Importance pre-winter review of site list and gritting requirements so contractor can attend sites when temperatures go lower than 4 degrees.

- Importance for sites to also have salt/grit supplies so that they can use themselves as a back-up and additional measure.

Incident 3 - Slip/Fall on ice caused by

What/Where: client employee was exiting their car in the morning at the property and slipped since the area was icy due to low temperatures and went to hospital. They were off work due to arm pain for a week. The site has been gritted on the night before and had a daily gritting schedule during winter.

Causes:

- Investigation determined that the site was gritted the evening before at 20:40; which fulfilled the contractual obligation. However, it snowed that evening, and the site was not re-gritted or cleared.

Lessons Learned:

- In this case, the main walkways should be re-gritted after snowfall to prevent falls.
- Importance for sites to also have salt/grit supplies so that they can use themselves as a back-up and additional measure.

Cold Weather Safety Moment

- Wet and icy conditions during this time of year can significantly increase the risk of incidents, especially slips, trips, and falls, both at work and in everyday life.
- It's essential to remain vigilant, whether you're moving around the site, driving home, or enjoying a weekend walk.
- Thankfully, there are steps we can take to prevent or minimise these risks, helping everyone stay safe and healthy throughout the winter season.



How do I stop slip incidents in icy conditions at work?

- **Monitor Weather Conditions:** Check the forecast ahead of time and only travel if necessary.
- **Apply Grit:** Treat areas prone to frost and ice to reduce slipperiness.
- **Protect Walkways:** Consider installing covers, such as arbour, high enough for safe pedestrian use.
- **Clear Cable Covers:** Ensure cable covers and protectors remain free of snow and ice.
- **Improve Lighting:** Maintain adequate lighting around the site to enhance visibility.
- **Guide Pedestrians:** Direct people to less slippery pathways and separate dangerous areas with barriers.
- **Prioritise Gritting Areas:** If all paths can't be treated regularly, inform employees about which areas will be prioritized.
- **Use Signage:** Display signs to remind everyone of slippery conditions.



If you are responsible for a site, consider developing a Snow & Ice Removal plan

- Determine which routes need to be cleared and the specific times they should be addressed.
- Prioritise key pedestrian pathways and emergency exit routes for maintenance.
- Designate locations for storing salt or grit supplies.
- Allocate areas for snow storage.
- Account for snow and ice melt by planning proper drainage routes and scheduling additional gritting as needed.
- Review and update your gritting and snow clearance contracts to align with your site plan, ensuring timely responses.

