

FLOOR MAINTENANCE: Slip Risk Prevention

Preventing Slip Risks

People rarely slip on a clean dry floor. There is hazard involved in almost all slip accidents. It can be introduced by the work activity or in fact by the cleaning activity itself.

Make Sure Cleaning Does Not Introduce an Additional Slip Risk!

The best method is to prevent hazards on a dry floor. Spot cleaning is a useful technique to clean up spills etc. as they happen, especially between whole floor cleaning.

You need to consider who is best placed to do the spot cleaning, for example those working in an area or dedicated cleaners.

At entrances, enclosed holders for wet umbrellas and effective well-maintained matting can stop the floor from getting wet. If water is tracked beyond the matting, can the matting be improved?

A smooth, wet floor creates a slip risk. People often slip on floors that have been left wet after cleaning. Mopping is one of the main causes of floors being left wet after cleaning. However, other cleaning techniques can also leave the floor wet, for example a poorly maintained squeegee on a scrubber-drier.



Restrict Pedestrian Access to Drying Floors

Clean during quiet hours, when pedestrians are not around.

Physically exclude people from wet cleaning areas, for example using physical barriers or blocking off an area while the floor is wet. Provide information on alternative routes. The 'exclusion' should be removed once the floor is dry so it continues to be effective.

Clean in sections, so there is a dry path through the area.

Use warning signs. Consider using cones etc. carefully, because they only warn of the hazard. Provide information on alternative routes.

Warning/Caution Signs:

- Do not prevent people from entering the area where they may slip.
- Often poorly mark the extent of the area where someone may slip.
- Are frequently left in areas that are clearly not being cleaned or are already dry, so people ignore them and they lose effectiveness.

Warning signs can be an effective means of informing people of a spill before it can be cleaned up, especially if the spill is visible, indicating the sign is being properly used and, critically, the sign is removed once the area is safe.