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Restaurant Slip-and-Fall Accident Prevention Program

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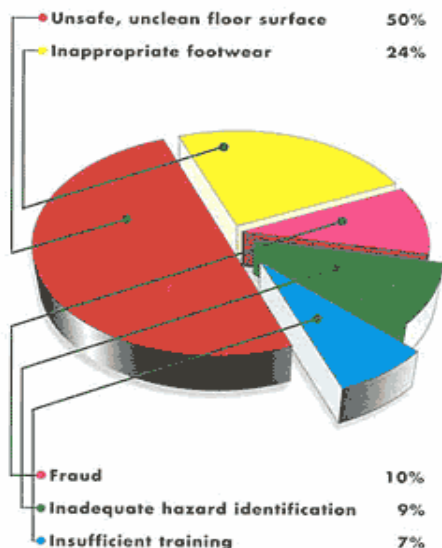
This document has been developed to assist the foodservice industry in the prevention of slip-and-fall accidents. This standard has been developed as a guideline for the foodservice industry to better manage one of their most frequent types of employee injuries.

Each year, more than 3 million foodservice employees and 1 million guests are injured as the result of a slip-and-fall accident. It is estimated that the foodservice industry spends more than \$2 billion each year for such injuries and is rising by 10% every year.

Quick Facts:

The most likely victim of a slip-and-fall accident is broken down into two groups: employees and invited guests. Part-time employees are twice as likely to experience a workplace accident than full-time employees and younger workers are more likely to slip-and-fall than older workers. Ironically, older workers cost per claim is more expensive than that of a younger worker. For guests, the most likely victim of a slip and fall is a caucasian woman, age 60 or older. Finally, the most likely cause of foodservice slips and falls is that of a wet floor.

Causes of Slips and Falls



Most slips and falls that occur in the foodservice industry are directly caused by wet or otherwise dangerous floors.

The remaining fifty-percent are broken down into four groups including: improper footwear, inadequate hazard identification, improper training, and fraud. For the foodservice executive, attention to floor maintenance and slip-resistant footwear can reduce as much as 75% of all work-related slips and falls. Regardless of employee skill level, education or training, proper floor covering use and maintenance along with the mandated use of slip-resistant footwear pays big dividends

Recommended Prevention Strategies



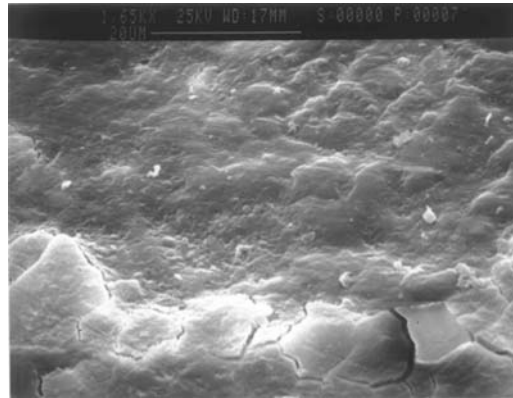
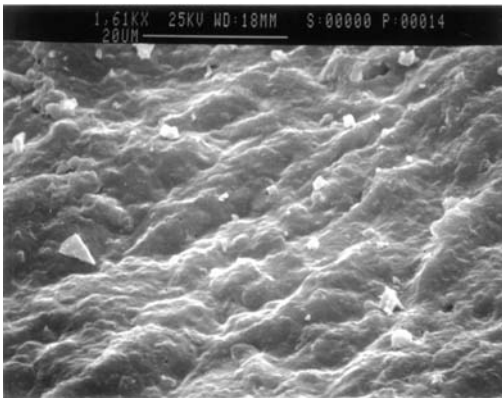
Select NFSI Certified floor coverings, cleaning chemicals, and equipment

It all starts at the ground level. In a recent poll taken of restaurant designers, the top five reasons for selecting a specific flooring material were:

1. Appearance
2. Cost
3. Easy of maintenance
4. Durability
5. Safety

When the direct cost of insurance, coupled with the growing number of accident claims and lawsuits are entered into the equation, safety quickly became number one! And with proper floor maintenance comes further cost reductions and enhanced appearance.

Recently, a major restaurant chain and insurance company entered into a program that rates the cleanliness of their restaurant floors by measuring their level of safety. The measurement of a floor's Static Coefficient of Friction (SCOF) directly relates to the floor's cleanliness. The higher the SCOF, the cleaner the floor. The lower the SCOF, the more contaminated (i.e. slippery) the floor becomes.



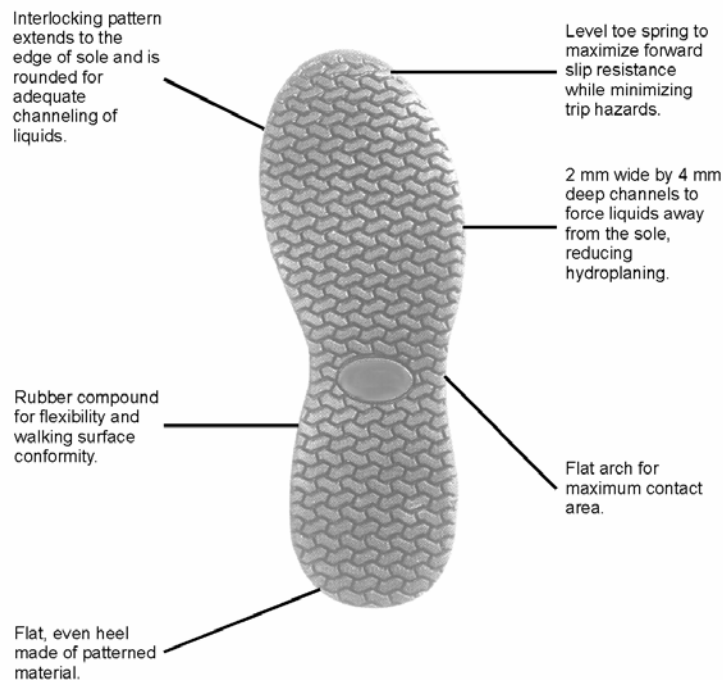
Pictured above are two scanning electron microscopic images of a quarry tiled floor. The image on the left is that of a new piece of quarry tile while the image on the right is a polymerized (contaminated) piece of quarry tile removed from service after a few years of use. Notice how the new quarry-tiled floor's surface is mountainous in appearance and uniformly textured while the polymerized surface has a crusty buildup in the foreground and an overall smoother appearance. The effects of wear along with oil, grease, soap film and mineral deposits are the primary causes of polymerized film, which are difficult to remove. Once polymerized, such floors require the use of a specialized chemical restoration treatment to restore them back to their original condition. Frequent maintenance with an NFSI Certified

cleaner, along with scrubbing tools and equipment, will help to preserve the floor's safety and appearance.

Slip-Resistant Footwear

Proper footwear is an important element in the battle to prevent slips and falls. It has been estimated that 24% of all foodservice slip-and-fall accidents are directly caused by improper footwear. Slip-resistant footwear can be purchased from local discount retailers or through several mail order companies for under \$25.00

Dissection of A Slip-Resistant Out Sole



Slip-resistant overshoes offer restaurant owners a new, low-cost option in accident prevention. For about half the price of slip-resistant shoes, overshoes provide the same high level of slip-resistance and can be shared among employees.

Oil-Resistant vs. Slip-Resistant

Oil-resistant shoes are not necessarily slip-resistant! For a shoe to be labeled "oil-resistant," it means that the sole will not deteriorate when exposed to petroleum-based products. Footwear of this type is intended for automotive or manufacturing applications and not restaurant use.

Clean, Safe and Certified

As the final step of this guideline we recommend that the restaurant owner periodically audit their floor's slip-resistance. Walkway safety auditing is a simple and highly effective means to prevent slip-and-fall accidents.



Setting a standard for safety is an important rule in restaurant management. It is likely that one day soon, your insurance premium will be based on the safety of your floors. Not only does it make good business sense to audit, it also enhances your restaurant's overall appearance and cleanliness. Since most slips and falls occur on wet floors, it is only logical that they be tested when wet. To provide safe walking conditions, it is recommended that floors meet a wet Static Coefficient of Friction (SCOF) of a 0.6 or higher.

For more information on walkway testing, please refer to NFSI 101-A Test Standard.

Hazard Identification

The posting of wet floor signs is an important step in preventing guest slips and falls. But can they be misused? Absolutely! In fact, in a recent study on the use of wet floor signs, it was found that most people tended to ignore them. Why? Because they were always out, even when the floor was not wet. The study revealed that 65% of the time you see a wet floor sign, the floor is not wet. Many business owners admit to such practice with the belief that such use assures them of a better defense in the event of a slip-and-fall lawsuit. Un-true. While the law requires that a property owner posts a warning in the event of a known hazard, the "failure to warn" rule also states that posting a warning when no such hazard exists is, itself, a bad practice.



It is recommended that the restaurant owner use signs that are visible from 360 degrees and tall enough to catch the pedestrian's attention. Although many brightly colored signs are available, the current OSHA Rule Section 29 calls for warnings to be yellow

