

Avoidance of slips, trips and falls

Introduction

Slips and Trips and the subsequent falls are a common cause of injury. Clubs should assess the risks of slips, trips and falls and take measures to reduce those risks to an acceptable level.

In general

Clubs are advised to ensure that ...

- floors are kept clean and dry.
- spills are prevented, any spills that do happen are cleaned up immediately.
- buckets and trays are used under leaks
- cleaning and maintenance problems are dealt with or reported.
- people keep off smooth wet floors.
- walkways are kept clear.
- bins are used for rubbish.
- leads do not trail across walkways.
- carpets are checked and any that are worn are removed or replaced
- rugs are checked and any that have turned up edges or corners are removed or replaced.

In the boathouse:-

Clubs are advised to ...

- Identify places where items (boats, oars, sculls, trestles, kitbags, etc.) should be stored.
- Ensure that items are returned to the places where they should be stored immediately after use.
- Encourage people to take care not to walk into riggers and other obstructions.
- Consider marking the floor to identify passageways where it is safe to walk.
- Consider cushioning the ends of riggers, trailer arms, etc..

ClubHub provides general guidance to clubs and their members. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the users' responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up to date before acting upon it. British Rowing accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

What about stairs?

Steps and stairs are one of the highest risk areas pedestrians will encounter. A slip or trip on stairs can result in a serious injury. Accidents on stairs may be down to design and maintenance issues or, could just as likely be related to human factors.

Clubs are advised to ensure that stairs...

- are well lit;
- have handrails at an appropriate height that contrasts with the surroundings;
- have good slip resistance properties, particularly at the leading edge;
- have clearly marked edges;
- are free from trip hazards or obstacles.

Slips and trips can occur outside of the buildings too,

Outside?

Clubs are advised to ensure that the ...

- Surfaces are maintained to minimise slip and trip risks
- Vehicle and pedestrian routes and entrances are clearly marked
- External area is well lit

Outside the boathouse:-

Clubs are advised to ensure that ...

- the area is kept tidy.
- oars and sculls are not left on the ground.
- parking is not permitted in areas where boats are moved.
- There is a designated safe parking place for bikes.
- people are encouraged to take care not to walk into riggers and other obstructions.

In winter

In winter, it is also important to consider:-

Lighting

It is important to do this both inside and outside of the buildings, as the effect of light changes during the day. If you can't see hazards on the ground you will need to improve the lighting (e.g. new lights or changing the type of bulb).

Clubs are advised to ensure that ...

- there is sufficient lighting to be able to see and avoid hazards that might be on the ground.

Wet and decaying leaves

Fallen leaves that become wet or have started to decay can create slip risks in two ways, they hide any hazard that may be on the path or they themselves create a slip risk.

Clubs are advised to ensure that ...

- leaves are removed at regular intervals.

Rain water

Clubs are advised to ensure that ...

- the external paved areas are slip resistant when wet.
- people are discouraged from taking shortcuts over grass or dirt which is likely to become slippery when wet. Consider converting existing shortcuts into proper paths.
- before laying paths, on new sites, the movement of pedestrians is considered. Many slip accidents happen at building entrances as people entering the building walk in rainwater.
- the fitting of good sized canopies at building entrances is considered. If a canopy is not a possibility, consider installing large, absorbent mats or even changing the entrance flooring to one which is non-slip.

Ice, frost, snow

Clubs are advised to ...

- Identify the outdoor areas used by pedestrians most likely to be affected by ice, for example: - building entrances, car parks, pedestrian walkways, shortcuts, sloped areas and areas constantly in the shade or wet.
- Monitor the temperature, as prevention is key. Take action whenever freezing temperatures are forecast.
- Use grit (see below) or similar, on areas prone to be slippery in frosty, icy conditions.
- Divert pedestrians to less slippery walkways and barrier off existing ones.
- remember to remove any warning cones once the hazard has passed or they will eventually be ignored.

Gritting

The most common method used to de-ice floors is gritting as it is relatively cheap, quick to apply and easy to spread. Rock salt is the most commonly used 'grit'. Salt can stop ice forming and cause existing ice or snow to melt. It is most effective when it is ground down, but this will take far longer on pedestrian areas than on roads.

Gritting should be carried out when frost, ice or snow is forecast or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the floor temperatures are at, or below freezing. The best times are early in evening before the frost settles or well in time before people arrive.

Salt doesn't work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the ground. If you grit when it is raining heavily the salt will be washed away, causing a problem if the rain then turns to snow.

Compacted snow, which turns to ice, is difficult to treat effectively with grit. Be aware that 'dawn frost' can occur on dry surfaces, when early morning dew forms and freezes on impact with the cold surface. It can be difficult to predict when or where this condition will occur.

Legal Requirements

The relevant regulation is the

Further Information

For further information see

The Health and Safety Executive guidance on slips and trips at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/SLIPS/>

How not to fall down stairs <http://www.wikihow.com/Not-Fall-Down-Stairs>

Slips and Trips Hazard spotting checklist www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck4.pdf

Preventing slips and trips at work www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg225.pdf

Slips and trips, the importance of cleaning www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/web/slips02.pdf