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## *Weekly Safety Tip*

*Life Is All About Choices!®*

December 8, 2014

### SCI Safety Tip: Holiday Hazards Falls on the Same Level

*By: Jennifer Busick*

*Source: <http://www.blr.com>*

*Date: December 2, 2014*

Yesterday, we talked about the ways workers can hurt themselves when they're trying to get at something that's out of reach. But falls from elevations are not the only hazard workers face during the holidays; they may also be at increased risk from falls on the same level. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 173,000 workers suffered reportable injuries from same-level falls in 2012.



Today, we'll look at the hazards specific to winter and the holidays that can create same-level fall hazards for workers.

#### **Slick Surfaces**

Slick surfaces may be more common both indoors and outdoors in winter.

The combination of cold temperatures and precipitation leads to snowy, icy sidewalks and parking lots, and tracked-in moisture may leave indoor areas wet and slick.



### ***SCI Safety Slogan***

**A spill, a slip, a  
hospital trip**

***James Lehrke-SCI***

Combat slippery surfaces by:

- Providing additional mats when needed
- Promptly removing ice and snow from parking lots, garages, and sidewalks
- Placing freezing weather warning monitors at entrances to employee parking areas
- Displaying contact numbers for the maintenance department so employees can report slick conditions

#### Hidden Obstacles

Snow can obscure curbs, drains, and other tripping hazards outdoors. Darkness comes earlier and lasts longer in winter, also making obstacles more difficult to see. Make it easier for workers and patrons to come and go safely by:

- Implementing an effective program for clearing walkways of snow and ice, *and*
- Maintaining adequate outdoor lighting in pedestrian areas.

## SCI OSHA Compliance: OSHA Inspections Tips for Success

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: December 2nd, 2014

OSHA [inspections](#) are a common source of dread among employers, particularly those in high-hazard industries, but they don't have to be. Approached right and executed well, an OSHA inspection can be a valuable learning experience. And for employers with an ongoing commitment to worker protection, an inspection is an opportunity to display that commitment. Keep reading for essential tips on surviving an inspection and insights into what OSHA's looking for in your safety program.

Tressi Cordaro, a shareholder in the workplace safety and health practice of the Jackson Lewis law firm in the Washington, D.C., region, offers the following advice for employers that hope to increase their chances of a good inspection outcome:

- **Document details.** Keep a set of all documents you provide to OSHA. If the compliance officer asks for copies of numerous safety programs (rather than just a copy of the injury and illness log), ask the officer to put the request in writing. Be sure to mark every page of the package of documents with the name of the business so that pieces do not get lost.
- **Employee interviews.** During an inspection, OSHA may ask employees to voluntarily (unless subpoenaed) engage in an interview and may have someone else of their choosing present. OSHA often prefers employees conduct the interview alone so that they will be more forthcoming about what management is doing or not doing. But in fact, says Cordaro, "OSHA can be quite aggressive and intimidating in these interviews and sometimes can do more harm than if a management employee were present."
- **OSHA no-show.** OSHA has 6 months from the time a violation occurs to issue citations. Cordaro notes that some employers wrongly believe that if they haven't heard from OSHA within a few months following an inspection, they can assume that the agency is not planning to cite. In fact, it's rare to hear back about citations and penalties in fewer than 3 months. Citations and penalties are often issued around the 6-month mark.





## Quick Tips for Healthy Living

PREVEA

Health & Wellness

### Winter Workout Checklist:

#### Check the Temperature

Check the temperature and wind chill factor before you venture out. According to the National Safety Council, it's safe to exercise outdoors if the temperature is 20 degrees or higher, provided you're properly dressed. However, when the wind chill factor falls below 20 degrees, it's best to stay inside.

#### Layer Wisely

Instead of wearing one heavy layer, put on fewer, thinner layers of clothing you can easily peel off. Done working out? Take one layer off at a time to allow your body to cool down slowly.

#### Wear Breathable Fabrics

Sweat build-up can make you feel colder, so wear breathable fabrics.

#### Adjust Your Distance

If you aren't used to working out in cold weather, start your workout at half your usual warm-weather distance and warm up indoors for five minutes before heading out. A quick warm up can make you less likely to strain a muscle.

#### Pay Attention to Your Body

Pay attention to signs you might be getting cold. Symptoms of frostbite include numbness, loss of feeling or a stinging sensation. If you think you might have frostbite, get out of the cold immediately and slowly warm the affected area.

#### Burn Calories with These Winter Activities!

Mix up your workouts to keep you interested in staying fit throughout the winter. Below are a few winter activities and the number of calories a 150-pound person would burn doing each.

- Two hours of snowboarding will burn 844 calories.
- Thirty minutes of shoveling snow will burn 211 calories.
- One hour of snowshoeing will burn 544 calories.
- Two hours of skiing will burn 953 calories.
- One hour of playing ice hockey will burn 544 calories.

*Get out there and be active...weather permitting, of course!*

While citations and fines may result, benefits of inspections include an awareness of the process and the opportunity to let employees demonstrate their knowledge and training. An OSHA inspection can also give a business owner peace of mind that processes and equipment are safe.

Linda Harvey is a licensed healthcare risk manager and president and CEO of the Linda Harvey Group, which consults with clients on OSHA and other regulatory matters. What does the agency expect during an inspection? "OSHA wants to see that employees have actually been trained and that the employer is doing what they say they are doing." Harvey says this extends beyond what's written on paper and beyond what managers say during an opening conference. What really matters is what inspectors see and hear.

She adds, "They want to know that what you're doing is effective, whether you have employees rotating on and off your safety committee, if you seek employee input, and if management is addressing workers' concerns." When concerns about safety fall on deaf ears, the result may be a disgruntled employee who, during an OSHA interview, may say something quite different from what you would like him or her to say.

When employers and employees work together to identify and fix hazards, it reduces the likelihood that employees will feel ignored. Strategies like conducting joint walkarounds and mock inspections not only help uncover risks but also solidify safety culture.

OSHA also wants to see a positive attitude. Put down the defensive posture and don't act like you know more than the inspector, Harvey advises. "It doesn't pay to shoot the messenger; they're just doing their job."

At the end of the day, make sure you're warding off problems by investing in worker protection, says Harvey. "Don't scrimp on your safety budget. When an accident happens nobody is going to forgive you, and it's hard to forgive yourself if the loss of life or limb was your fault."



What do you think?

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In Loving Memory of Jessica Lehrke

**SAVE TOMORROW  
THINK SAFETY TODAY**