

Tips to Stop Slip and Falls

George Sotter, a registered Professional Engineer and author of *STOP Slip and Fall Accidents*, specializes in the prevention and investigation of slip, trip, and fall accidents. Sotter offers some simple and cost-effective ways of stopping slip and fall accidents.

- Post warnings when and where appropriate, using pictographs to be understandable to people who can't read.
- Provide clean, absorbent floor mats so students can dry the soles of their shoes. Discourage dancers from wearing high heeled dance shoes and tap shoes to the studio. Also discourage students from wearing sandals—they are notorious for contributing to slip and fall accidents.
- Make sure stairs comply with your local building code, stair treads are easy to see, and handrails are firmly mounted and easy to grip.
- Use absorbent mats and rugs in wet areas, such as drinking fountains and ice or beverage vending machines. Make sure the mats have beveled edges and are not tripping hazards.
- Apply abrasive tapes or coatings to floors and stairs. Replace the tape if it becomes loose, worn, or torn.
- Maintain surveillance of potentially slippery areas, and clean up spills immediately to prevent falls.
- Inspect floors for debris, extension cords or cables, brooms, clothing, and props that may create a tripping hazard. If there is anything in the walkway that should not be there, remove it immediately.
- Use abrasive mats to trap rain, mud, and snow at the entrance. When mats get dirty or saturated, exchange them for clean ones.
- Chemically etch ceramic tile and stone that is slippery when wet. Select your contractor carefully. Be sure the contractor is properly insured or bonded before contracting these services.

If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.