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October is the perfect time to begin thinking about fall - slip, trip and falls, that is

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Injuries caused by slip, trip and fall accidents can be expensive, disruptive, painful and sometimes even tragic for property owners and managers. The best way to reduce or prevent these accidents is to be proactive by developing a plan designed to identify, control and eliminate these losses.

A good place to start is to identify surfaces and locations where slip, trip and fall accidents have previously occurred. To do this, owners and managers should analyze loss reports to help to identify like types of occurrences. The similarities may include a particular location, an area at a location, time of year, time of day, or type of surface, to name a few. A review of the loss history will help to identify trends that may point to specific hazards in need of correction.

Another important step is to conduct regular and frequent inspections of all working and walking areas. Property managers and maintenance staff should keep an eye out for slippery surfaces, spills, highly trafficked areas, loose mats or carpeting, poor lighting, potholes, poor housekeeping, cables or wires and uneven floor surfaces. When an area is identified as having the potential for an accident, there should be a warning sign posted and/or the area should be marked off until the hazard can be corrected.

Documentation and follow up is an essential part of controlling the cost of claims associated with these losses. When deficiencies are noted, and repairs have been done, it is important to document all efforts to correct the situation. Evidence of your actions will help to aide in the defense of potential negligence claims.

Overall, the benefits to an effective floor safety program are many: a safer working environment for employees and tenants, a better community image, reduction of negligence claims and more desirable insurance rates.

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