

December 2012

## Kitchen Slip and Fall Prevention

Kitchen floors that become slippery because of oil, water, or food debris cause many restaurant worker slips and falls. A twisted ankle, twisted back, broken wrist or knee cap – these are all injuries that can result. While these injuries mean pain and suffering for your employees, they also may mean financial consequences for your business.

The direct cost of slip and fall accidents is small in comparison to the indirect costs such as lost work time and productivity, overtime for replacement workers, administrative time, and the potential for higher workers compensation insurance premiums.

### You can take action now to prevent slip and falls

Build a strong safety culture by providing proper training and supervision and making a small investment in promoting safety awareness in your business. Discuss the following guidelines with your employees:

#### Footwear and floor mats

- Educate and monitor employees to ensure that they are wearing closed-toe, slip-resistant footwear.
- Enroll employees in a shoe program such as “Shoes for Crews” to help employees purchase proper footwear by extending payment for the shoes over a few payroll cycles.
- In kitchen areas where water or liquid is prevalent, cover the floor with bi-level mats that allow liquid to percolate down, avoiding contact with soles of shoes, to reduce slips.

#### Spill cleanup procedures

- Train staff to immediately pick up dropped produce and food product before it is stepped on or smeared, creating a very slippery area.
- Train staff to immediately clean up liquid spills.
- For larger liquid or oil spills, use an absorbent product that removes the moisture from the spill, leaving the area clean and dry.
- Create spill stations to make sure that absorbent product and cleanup tools are located in a centralized area that is easily accessible.

#### Good housekeeping practices

- Train employees to be responsible for their own work areas and stations. Each area should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Use a housekeeping audit form to routinely rate housekeeping performance and to identify areas of improvement.
- Provide an adequate storage area to maintain equipment and keep stock organized.

*Make sure that your employees are “on the job” during this holiday season  
by training them to work safely!*