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Introduction

Slips, trips and falls are one of the leading causes of accidents in this country. More than 225,000 people are injured each year from these accident causes, and more than 60,000 on-the-job injuries occur. TLC Companies recognizes that slips, trips and falls are one of the leading accident causes among our truck drivers. Along with material handling and vehicle collisions, this is an important area of focus for prevention.

At TLC Companies, we want to assist our clients in understanding how slips, trips and falls occur, and how to avoid hazardous conditions and unsafe acts that cause them. Many slip, trip and fall accidents are preventable if the driver takes responsibility for his/her own safety during situations and conditions, which commonly cause these accidents. This program is designed for this reason and will help assist you in prevention. We encourage you to share this information with all your drivers and to promote the success of this program in your company.
Purpose

The purpose of this program is to train drivers in the importance of preventing injuries resulting from slips, trips and falls. The program and training will help to reduce slip, trip and fall accidents primarily by making drivers aware of all potential hazards involved with their job, even when they are not behind the wheel.

The slip, trip and fall program is designed to help drivers understand their role in accident prevention when getting in and out of the cab, walking around the rig, climbing in or on the trailer to inspect cargo, performing coupling/uncoupling, walking around loading docks, and all other situations where the driver is out of his/her seat. This program is designed to assist both the experienced and non-experienced driver with slip, trip and fall prevention.
Objectives

The objectives of this program are to provide key information to assist drivers in recognizing potential slip, trip and fall hazards. More importantly, drivers will be able to understand how and why fall injuries occur and measures to prevent them.

For this program to be effective in reducing slips, trips and falls, a driver must:

- Understand your company's requirements regarding vehicle equipment (i.e., steps, deck plates, hand-holds, grips and other devices).

- Receive training on this program. Each driver should:
  1) Receive a copy of this program and sign off acknowledging he/she read it,
  2) Go through the training module either in a group or by individual,
  3) View a slip, trip and fall prevention video from the Recommended Resource List, and
  4) Take the Slip, Trip and Falls Exercise.

- Implement measures and continue to use these measures in your effort to prevent injuries from slips, trips and falls.
Why Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls is Important to You

You are a professional and you drive a truck as your livelihood, but in order to continue your job, you must be healthy—this means staying injury free, both in driving and non-driving situations. Drivers are very vulnerable to conditions and situations leading to slip, trip or fall accidents, and these often result in injuries such as cuts, lacerations, punctures, contusions, strains, sprains, broken bones, concussions, etc. The consequences of a serious accident can be extreme pain, paralysis and even death. So don’t think this will not happen to you, because it happens to professional drivers every day, and this is one of the leading causes of driver injuries at TLC Companies.

Keep in mind that you will not learn this program or take this program seriously for one key reason: You think this type of accident will not happen to you! We can assure you that without understanding and implementing prevention measures, these injuries will happen, and hopefully they will not happen to you! Just think about the number of near miss or close-call accidents you have experienced.

Be aware of your footing at all times. Be sure you know where you are stepping and be certain the surface is safe, firm and free of slippery substances. Clear all steps, deck plates and other surfaces from snow, ice, grease, etc.

We encourage you to take the time to read, understand and follow this program. It is for your benefit and safety. We also ask for any feedback and input you have regarding this program. Our goal is to keep it effective, up-to-date and successful in our effort to reduce injuries among our drivers.
The Mechanics of Slips, Trips and Falls

Three forces are at work when you slip, trip or fall: friction, momentum and gravity. Friction is resistance, like your shoe soles and the surface you’re walking on. You know you have to be more aware and cautious when walking on wet surfaces like snow and ice, than on dry pavement. Momentum relates to speed and size of a moving object. If you lose your balance and start to fall, your momentum and size will work against you regaining your balance. And gravity is the force that pulls you to the ground.

**Slips:** You slip when there is an immediate loss of grip between your shoes and the surface you’re walking on. Slips result when there is material such as ice, oil, grease, water, fluid, etc., on a surface, which can create a loss of traction—causing you to lose your balance. When you slip you can injure yourself by straining your back or falling and breaking a bone.

Your shoes can make a big difference. Check for soles or treads that have worn smooth. Check for gum, dirt, snow, grease or any kind of debris that could cause you to slip or trip. And, of course, always be cautious and think about your safety whenever you enter or exit your cab, inspect your vehicle or check the cargo on your trailer.

Review your company’s footwear purchase policy. Remember that all footwear worn on the job must be non-slip, closed toe, with adequate ankle support. No tennis shoes or sandals should be worn.

**Trips:** You trip when your foot stubs or hits another object. It may be an uneven surface change in elevation, damaged surface (like a pot hole), or any small item sticking up from the ground. When you trip, it’s likely you will fall and possibly injure yourself. In some cases, a trip may simply throw you off balance, and you can recover, but in some instances you may not. Occasionally you can lessen the injury by being mentally prepared for the impact and attempt to break your fall.

Trips usually result from not paying attention to where you’re walking. You may also be in a hurry and misjudge where an object is, or simply not see it at all. Trips are dangerous, but you can prevent them by watching where you’re going, picking up debris in your way, and taking time to be sure nothing is in your path.

**Falls:** You fall when you’ve lost your footing and center of balance. If you fall at ground level, your risk of injury could range from minor to severe. If you fall from an elevated place, there is a greater likelihood of serious injury, depending on the height of your fall. Be especially
careful when climbing up and down from cabs, flatbeds, trailers and docks.

Be aware of your footing at all times. Be sure you know where you are stepping and be certain the surface is safe, firm and free of slippery substances. Clear all steps, deck plates, and other surfaces from snow, ice, grease, etc.
Causes of Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips are often caused by substances on the tractor steps, deck plates, and other surfaces, such as the dock flooring, steps leading to the dock, and surfaces around the tractor-trailer.

The most common substances include the following:
- Ice
- Snow
- Water
- Slippery materials such as grease, oil fluids (brake, antifreeze, etc.)

Trips are often caused by conditions and obstacles such as these:
- Unsecured, loose or damaged steps, deck plates and other stepping/climbing surfaces on tractors
- Damaged flooring, protruding or loose objects in trailer or on flatbed.
- Docks with damaged surfaces, debris, poor housekeeping
- Stairways, steps, ramps, curbs and damaged or uneven surfaces
- Truck equipment such as hoses, electrical wires, tools, etc.

Falls are the result of a slip or trip. If you fall, it is too late! This happens primarily from one of the situations or conditions listed above.
Safety on Your Truck

How to Recognize and Prevent Hazards Leading to Slips and Trips

Getting in and out of the cab is a common action, but one with many potential hazards. It ranks as one of the most consistently dangerous things you do on the job. You could slip on a step, miss-step, twist an ankle, or lose your grip on the handhold and lose your balance. Because getting in and out of the cab is such a routine part of your job, it’s easy to become inalert to this hazard. Be especially alert when climbing in or out of cab-over tractors. Due to their configuration, these present a greater potential for slips/trips/falls.

Being inalert or in a hurry is the most common cause of accidents. Identify the conditions, situations and poor habits, and develop a mental picture of the correct methods to use when entering and exiting your rig. It is your responsibility to act safely!

On a long haul, you will inevitably encounter various types of weather, especially in the winter. Be alert to those conditions that can change gripping and traction outside your cab. Snow, rain, sleet, ice, mist, etc., can affect gripping.

In addition to your own responsibility to act safely, Federal regulations require that your vehicle is properly equipped with steps, handholds and deck plates to help prevent accidents. Section 399.207 Truck and truck-tractor access requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) states that:

A ny person entering or exiting the cab or accessing the rear portion of a high-profile cab-over-engine truck or tractor-trailer shall be afforded sufficient steps and handholds and/or deck plates to allow the user to have at least three limbs in contact with the truck or truck/tractor at any time.

Three-Point Contact, also called the “three-point rule,” means: having two feet and a hand or two hands and a foot in contact with the vehicle when entering it or exiting. The fact is that three-point contact gives you the best balance and least chance of slipping, tripping or falling, as well as the best chance to catch yourself if you do slip.

To get into your cab safely, you should have both hands free. Put anything you’re carrying into the cab first, and then climb in. Don’t try getting in with an armful; that’s asking for trouble. Most importantly, keep three points of contact with the vehicle at all times.
To get out of your cab safely, never jump! Use the same procedures used to get in: exit with your body facing the vehicle, using the three-point rule. You also need to avoid bad habits such as swinging down from the cab or trailer, skipping or missing steps, and stepping up or down on fuel tanks and tires. And, slow down and take extra precautions—especially in bad weather. Being in a hurry is a major factor in falling accidents. When you hurry, you forget to take precautions, you overlook hazards, and you take chances that make you vulnerable to a slip/ fall accident.

**Coupling/Uncoupling**

Some of the hazards already mentioned are especially prevalent when coupling and uncoupling. Grease, oil, snow, ice and water are dangerous slipping factors when you’re working on or around your rig. There are some other hazards as well:

- Do not step over air and electrical lines because you could lose your footing or trip. It’s better to go under the lines or climb down and walk around to the other side.
- You need to be on firm footing when pulling the release handle, not only to avoid slipping, but also to avoid a back injury.
- Take precautions when adjusting the fifth wheel. Watch fingers, bumping heads, and slip/ trips under the tractors. Walk around rather than jumping over air and electrical lines.
- Be aware that a tractor or trailer can sometimes move even with the brake on. Always chock the wheels.

If you need to climb up onto the tractor or trailer, maintain a secure footing and use three points of contact with handholds or other grips.

**Loading/Unloading**

Special care needs to be taken on and around flatbeds. Whether loading, unloading, securing the load, checking tarps or other activities, you need to have at least three points of contact and be certain of your footing. Use common sense and extra care. Be aware of your surroundings and the fall potential at all times.

- Use handholds and step up or down on the under-ride bar at the rear
- Don’t jump or swing down from a flatbed
Never attempt to get onto the trailer by putting one leg all the way into the trailer while the other is still on the ground. You could over-stretch and strain or even rupture your groin. Instead, use steps, bars and a firm grip. Inspect the supports and take your time.

On other types of trailers, such as van types, use the three-point rule with steps, rails and handholds. Use extra care when climbing into a van-type trailer at ground level. Maintain three points of contact if you must open (or close) a roll-up door and either enter (or exit) the trailer simultaneously.

Use a flashlight in a dark trailer to avoid tripping on unseen objects.

Avoid walking backward, because by doing so you’re asking for trouble and may trip/fall. If you must walk backward, stop and check your pathway frequently. When guiding another driver who is backing, check behind you often so you don’t trip.

When climbing on a tanker, use care on ladders and walkways. Remember, ladders and walkways are exposed to the elements and may become wet, icy and slippery, making footing unsafe.

Weather

Drivers will encounter a variety of weather conditions on a long haul. Before getting out of the cab, test footing by sliding a foot across the step or deck before climbing down. If it seems icy or slippery, use a long handled ice scraper or other appropriate tool to loosen and clear the surface. Take your time and use extreme caution when exiting.

Weather conditions affect your vehicle. It’s obvious that snow, ice, sleet and rain will make surfaces treacherous, but there are other factors to be aware. A sudden gust of wind could force you off balance. Black ice, a well-known road hazard, could also form on your steps or deck plates. Heavy fog can reduce your visibility and cause you to be injured walking around your rig. Bad weather of any kind should cause you to be very alert in and around your vehicle.

Housekeeping

It is important to keep your truck’s windows and lights clean, but not at the expense of a slip or fall. Don’t climb on your vehicle to reach them, but carry a portable ladder. If you do not have one, oftentimes they are available at truck stops. It is preferable to use a long-handled brush or squeegee rather than to climb a ladder. Keep one of these accessible for your use.
Take action to identify and clean up spills when you see them. If it is not your responsibility, be sure to report them so action can be taken. Be aware of spills and debris in your trailer, loading dock and in the shipping/receiving areas. Housekeeping is the most common cause of accidents, and many of these involve slips, trips and falls. Be proactive in identifying and removing such hazards so that you or others do not experience accidents.

**Loading Docks**

Nearly 25% of all industrial accidents happen on or around loading docks. Clearly, you need to be especially careful around them. Look for snow, ice, oil and grease on ramps, stairs and aisles. Be alert for obstacles and debris when walking through or working in equipment and supplies storage areas. Be cognizant of the danger on platforms, ramps and elevated areas. Don’t forget that falls from higher levels are generally more harmful than from same level falls. To prevent slip, trip and falls on loading docks, consider the following:

- Use handrails, rings and grips
- Never run up or down stairs
- Don’t carry objects obstructing your view
- Report unlit, poorly lit areas and unfavorable conditions to the shipping/receiving manager

Other hazards to consider include the “creeping” of your trailer away from the dock, leaving a gap between the dock and the trailer. Always chock your wheels.

The height of your trailer may lower as cargo is loaded or rise as cargo is unloaded, creating a tripping hazard between the dock and the trailer. Make sure that the dock plate is properly positioned to avoid tripping. If a gap exists between the dock and trailer, consider use of a plywood sheet. Special emphasis is needed to watch for anything that protrudes from pallets, totes or crates. Loading docks are often unfamiliar areas for drivers, due to special hazards and varying conditions and situations. Take special care and be especially alert at loading docks.

**Clothing**

Clothing is another factor to consider to minimize hazards. Avoid loose shirts, jackets and pants—clothing that could become snagged on projections, causing you to fall. Keep your shirt tucked in. Don’t wear shorts, as shorts won’t offer
any protection in the event of a fall. Although wallet chains are popular, be aware the chain could catch on something and cause problems.

**Footwear**

Good traction between your shoes and any surface is essential. Your shoes or boot soles should have ridges or ribs for better traction. Shoes with neoprene soles can be safely used on most wet or dry surfaces, but they are not recommended for oily conditions. Many shoes on the market have soles made of hard rubber and composites that are not penetrated by oil and grease. Crepe soles are best for rough, wet or dry concrete, but are not recommended for tile, smooth concrete or wood surfaces. Leather soles should be avoided because they provide poor traction when wet.

The best advice is to watch where you step so that you don’t get slippery liquids on your soles. It’s also best to avoid shoes with laces, but if yours have them, the laces should be double-tied or short enough to discourage tripping on them.

- Rubber-soles shoes with a tread provide some traction, but use caution
- Spikes, studs and bolts in shoes provide good traction, but also damage floors.
- Shoes with grit-covered soles provide good, all-around traction, even on snow and oil.

There are other devices available to increase shoe traction, such as strap-on cleats and non-skid sandals and boots that clip over shoes. They should be used when tying down loads in unfavorable weather. If possible, try and plan outside loading/unloading during favorable conditions.

Be aware that many slips and falls result from highly polished, waxed floors found in rest stops and restaurants. These floors are buffed, have a high shine or gloss, and areas near entry doors are often wet, oily and/or dirty. If you encounter polished floors of this nature, be especially careful and test your traction by sliding one foot on the surface first before walking on it. Also look out for mats or runners placed on shiny, slippery floors. The mat may increase traction but slide across the floor when you step on it, or you may trip on corners that often curl up. Some places add abrasives to the floors to increase traction, but this may not be as effective in high traffic areas when wet.

Remember that any time you are in a hurry, walking too fast and not looking ahead and down, you are most prone to slips, trips and falls, especially on shiny floors and loose carpet.
Other Areas Where Slips, Trips and Falls May Occur

Slips, trips and falls are not just limited to your rig, trailer or the loading dock. Be cognizant of those areas where many people are injured, not just drivers. These include the following:

- **Parking lots and sidewalks**
  Look for:
  - Cracked pavements and sidewalks
  - Parking lot dividers
  - Speed bumps
  - Changes in elevation

- **Stairways and ramps**
  - Poor lighting
  - Damaged or uneven stairs
  - Loose handrails
  - Clutter or debris

- **Public restrooms**
  - Watch out for water on slippery tile from sinks and showers

Key Tips for Avoiding Slips, Trips and Falls

The two most important factors in avoiding slips, trips and falls are:

- Awareness
- Prevention

Awareness means following a simple rule: If you see a hazard, correct it or report it so it can be corrected immediately.

- Always be on the lookout for potential problems and stay alert.
- Become aware of changing weather conditions.
- Use proper footwear
Accident Response Procedure
Summary and Conclusion

Please review these important points outlined in the slips, trips and falls program.

✓ The consequences of a fall can include serious injury. This includes hospital stay, burden on your family, and loss of income.

✓ Remember: Slips are a loss of traction. Trips results when your foot hits an object. Falls occur when you lose your balance.

✓ Approximately 225,000 falls injuries happen per year; 60,000 on the job. Trucking industry average cost on a lost-time slip, trip or fall injury is $28,000.

✓ When getting in and out of your cab, use the three-point rule; three limbs in contact at all times. Avoid bad habits such as jumping, stretching and being in a hurry. Take special precautions when coupling and uncoupling and loading/unloading.

✓ Practice good housekeeping and correct or report slipping and tripping hazards.

✓ During loading/unloading, be alert to changes in trailer position, gaps and other potential hazards.

✓ Bad weather requires extra cautions due to slippery conditions.

✓ Wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

✓ Be alert around loading docks. Watch for oil and grease, slippery ramps, stairs and other hazards that could contribute to a slip, trip or fall injury.

✓ Also, be especially alert in parking lots, sidewalks, stairways and ramps, and public restrooms. These areas pose special hazards that should be avoided.

Conclusion

Getting in and out of your cab safely is easy to take for granted, but when you take things for granted an accident will eventually happen. Think about your stake in taking care of yourself and about what could happen if you fell from your cab or trailer.

Slips, trips and falls are common occurrences in life, but there are measures you can take to minimize your chances of being a victim. Think safety every time you get on, in, off or out of your rig. Think safety when you load and unload, couple and uncouple, are at loading docks or while checking your cargo. Keep in mind that seemingly insignificant things like secure traction and footing are vitally important in keeping you working.

Don’t think slips, trips and falls always happen to the other person. They just may happen to you!
Slip, Trip and Fall Exercise

Name: __________________________________ Date:_______________

Company: _______________________________ No. Correct: _________

Please choose (circle) the best answer.

1. A slip is defined as:
   A. An immediate loss of grip between your shoes and the surface you’re walking on
   B. Something that happens when you’re not watching where you’re going
   C. A piece of paper with notes or instructions
   D. Falling from an elevated level

2. There are three forces at work when you slip. They are:
   A. Inertia, speed and force
   B. Friction, momentum and gravity
   C. Mass, density and time
   D. Movement, space and reaction

3. Slips for drivers commonly occur from:
   A. Coupling/uncoupling
   B. Performing pre-trip inspections
   C. Entering and exiting the cab
   D. Tying down loads on flatbeds

4. A trip is defined as:
   A. A vacation
   B. When your foot stubs or hits another object
   C. An experience you had twenty years ago
   D. Falling from another level

5. A fall is defined as:
   A. What a boxer does when he throws a fight
   B. The time of year between summer and winter
   C. Losing an important position
   D. A loss of footing and center of balance

6. When loading/unloading, it’s important to:
   A. Take frequent coffee breaks
   B. Be alert to changes in trailer position and gaps
   C. Only do it during daylight hours
   D. Complete the task quickly
TRUCK DRIVER SLIP, TRIP AND FALL PREVENTION PROGRAM

Name: ____________________________________________

7. Three-point contact or the three-point rule refers to:
   A. Arm, leg and head in contact with the vehicle
   B. The number of fingers required to grip the handholds
   C. Simultaneous two hands and foot, or two feet and hand in contact with
      the vehicle
   D. The minimum number of legs on a three-footed stool

8. Areas where people are most vulnerable to slips, trips and falls include all but
   one of the following:
   A. Offices
   B. Stairways and ramps
   C. Parking lots and sidewalks
   D. Public restrooms

9. You need to take special precautions when coupling/uncoupling because:
   A. It's dangerous climbing and walking around your rig
   B. The procedure takes more than one hour to complete correctly
   C. Your mind may be focused on driving, and this is an insignificant part of
      your job
   D. Your landing gear might be down, causing delays

10. The safest way to get around on a flatbed is to:
    A. Jump down, making sure the landing area is level
    B. Do "the splits" when getting onto the flatbed, but only if you have long
        legs
    C. Move carefully but rapidly so you have more time on the road
    D. Use handholds, steps and under-ride bars

11. The best shoes/soles to wear for good surface contact are:
    A. Rubber, because it rarely slips on wet surfaces
    B. Shoes with grit-covered soles, because of good traction
    C. Sandals, because they're so comfortable
    D. Cowboy boots with cleats, because of the correct image you should
        convey

12. To avoid snagging or catching, good clothing wear is:
    A. Loose, baggy and long
    B. A T-shirt, necklace and shorts
    C. Snug, tucked in and comfortable
    D. Mod, stylish and in vogue

13. What proportion of industrial accidents occur on loading docks?
    A. 75%
    B. 25%
    C. 35%
    D. 55%
TRUCK DRIVER SLIP, TRIP AND FALL PREVENTION PROGRAM

Name: ________________________________

14. When at a loading dock, “creeping” refers to:
   A. Staying low to avoid detection
   B. A way of walking to avoid oil and grease
   C. Your trailer moving away from the dock
   D. Ducking your head to avoid low beams

15. All of the following are measures to prevent slips, trips and falls except for:
   A. Inspect and repair all handholds, deck plates and stops
   B. Stay alert and watch for hazards
   C. Delegate slip, trip and fall prevention to the shipping or receiving supervisor
   D. Use the three-point contact system
Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls
Training Record

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Videos and Other Resources List

Slip, Trip & Falls Training Kit
J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc.
(800) 327-6868