

### Safety Sheet 8 – Preventing Winter Slips and Falls

The number and severity of slips and falls increase in the winter months. While snow falls gently, people don't. Be on the lookout for these hazardous conditions.

- Slippery surfaces due to water, ice or snow from footwear.
- Snowy and ice-covered sidewalks or paths.
- Freeze / thaw cycles.
- Melted snow or ice, or grit at the entrance of buildings.
- Black ice (thin, nearly invisible coating of ice on paved surfaces caused when temperatures rise above freezing during the day and drop below freezing at night).
- Obstructed sidewalks and roadways.
- Certain type of winter footwear (i.e. high heels, leather-soled shoes).
- Packages that are too large or heavy that can affect your balance or obstruct your view.
- A hat or scarf that blocks your view or makes it difficult to hear traffic.

#### WEATHER

- Don't get taken by surprise – listen to the weather report and be prepared for slippery conditions. Take your time, pay attention to where you're going and adjust how you walk according to weather conditions. Be a “defensive walker”.

#### FOOTWEAR

- Wear appropriate winter footwear that is well-insulated, waterproof, has a non-slip, thick rubber sole and a wide, low heel. Ice grippers can also improve walking on ice and snow.

#### PARKING LOTS

- If you arrive before 7 a.m., don't expect parking lots and sidewalks to be cleared yet. Proceed carefully when getting in and out of vehicles.

#### SIDEWALKS AND PATHWAYS

- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If you must walk on the street, walk against the flow of traffic and as close to the curb as possible. Before stepping off a curb, make sure oncoming vehicles have come to a complete stop.
- Walk on cleared, well-lit pathways. Don't take shortcuts or go over snow banks.

#### BUILDINGS

- Check overhead for ice hazards (building roofs, electric lines, etc.) Be especially cautious around building entrances, loading docks, curbs and other areas where ice can form.
- Wipe your feet before entering a building and before climbing steps. Cold boots or footwear with snow or ice caught on the soles can become quite slippery when you enter a warm building.
- You can help reduce the number of icy spots by spreading salt/sand where needed. White and grey boxes with a salt and sand mixture are strategically located on campus.

The University is responsible for providing a safe work environment. However, employees and students must also work to improve safety on campus. If a fall or injury occurs or if you spot a hazard:

1. Report hazards immediately to Facilities Service (ex. 2222) or to your supervisor. For details on [hazard reporting procedures](#) visit the Office of Risk Management website.
2. Report falls or injuries to your supervisor immediately. He or she must complete an [Accident, Incident or Occupational Disease Report form](#).
3. Report a critical injury\* to Protection Services immediately.

\*According to Regulation 834 of the Occupational and Safety Act and regulations, "critically injured" means an injury of a serious nature that: a) places life in jeopardy (endangers a person's life); b) produces unconsciousness; c) results in substantial loss of blood; d) involves the fracture of a leg or an arm but not a finger or a toe; e) involves the amputation of a leg, an arm, a hand or a foot but not a finger or a toe; f) consists of burns to a major portion of the body; or g) causes the loss of sight in an eye.