

For: Heads of all Establishments/Settings
OCC Managers
Governors/Management Committees
Trade Union Safety Representatives
Intranet

Issue SAB 7
February 2008

PREVENTION OF SLIP ACCIDENTS ON QUARRY TILED FLOORS

Background

Slips and trips are a major cause of accidents leading to injury and time off work. Managers must carry out suitable risk assessments to reduce the likelihood of such accidents occurring.



This advice is aimed at those who manage areas, primarily kitchens (but may also include corridors, changing rooms, etc.), where there are quarry tiled floors.

When the quarry tiled floor remains clean and dry there is little significant risk of anyone having a slip accident. However when the floor becomes greasy, or even worse wet, then the surface will become extremely slippery. A regular, strict cleaning procedure must be adhered to in order to prevent the build up of grease and oil. It is equally important **to ensure that any spillage is cleaned up immediately.**

Several slip accidents on quarry tiled floors have been reported to the Health & Safety Team. A number of these have unfortunately resulted in bone fractures which have not only caused considerable distress to the injured person but have also involved time off work and as a consequence extra expense to the school/setting in arranging alternative cover. One accident, that was the result of a slip on a wet quarry tiled floor, left the injured person with a fractured wrist. In 2006 the HSE served an Improvement Notice on Oxfordshire County Council for failure to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of slip risks.

Research activities

The H&S team undertook an in depth project to see if any risk reduction strategies could be applied to reduce any re-occurrence. Several sites were selected to undertake a slip resistance assessment of their quarry tile flooring. These assessments utilised a precision gauge to measure the roughness of the floor under different conditions in conjunction with a predictive computerised programme developed by HSE research centre personnel.

The results that came out of these assessments consistently predicted:

Low slip	<i>when clean and dry</i>
Low/moderate slip	<i>when dry but greasy</i>
Significant slip	<i>when wet but clean</i>
High slip	<i>when wet and greasy</i>

What do managers need to do to reduce slip risks in kitchens and similar areas with quarry tile floor surfaces?

The following **tool kit tips** have been developed to assist managers:

<p>Keep it clean</p>	<p>There will always be a tendency for grease to build up in a kitchen environment. Therefore, in addition to the daily cleaning schedule it is strongly recommended that the tiled flooring should be subjected to a deep clean at least once a term (every 6 weeks) utilising a rotary scrubbing machine. The use of a correct degreasant (at the proper concentration) is also vital. Q C S (the in county provider) recommends the use of 'Aggressor' from Johnson Diversey. A final rinse of the floor with clean water will further reduce the risk of slips.</p> <p>Daily maintenance of the floor with a wet mop should keep the floor in a satisfactory condition. Remember that the mop itself must be kept clean. It should be washed and rinsed thoroughly after each use and replaced at appropriate intervals.</p>
<p>Keep it dry</p>	<p>For obvious reasons whilst the tiled floor is in the process of being cleaned it will be extremely hazardous to anyone attempting to walk on it. For this reason it is sensible to wash the floor at the end of each day. Hazard warning signs must be displayed not only at each entrance to the kitchen/area but within the kitchen area itself to advise caution to others. The floor must be thoroughly dried after each mopping.</p> <p>Splashes of water, for instance around the washing up sink or under the steamer, are a regular occurrence. When these are first noticed they must be dried up, not with a wet mop - which spreads the wet area – but with a dry mop or disposable paper towels.</p>
<p>Application of Antislip coating</p>	<p>Following research and trial application studies, the Health & Safety team have identified a coating which is guaranteed to significantly reduce the risk of slipping on wet tiled floors.</p> <p>This treatment is being applied to all quarry tiled floors in all school kitchens that are managed through Food with Thought. Extensive tests have shown that even when the floor is wet individuals cannot make their footwear slip. NB Once the floor has been treated a purpose made degreasant MUST be used or the non-slip properties of the surface will be lost.</p>
<p>Raise awareness</p>	<p>Managers must bring the risk assessment to the attention of all at risk employees and others.</p>

It is vital that a suitable flooring surface is provided in these hazardous areas to prevent falls in the future. As the risks posed are foreseeable and enforcement action has already been taken your options are:

- ◆ **Refurbish the kitchen, and similar areas with a non slip floor covering**
This may well be an expensive solution depending on the age and condition of kitchen equipment. There may be a need to upgrade equipment to satisfy revised Health & Safety requirements as well as the need to upgrade and safeguard your services.

- ◆ **Application of Antislip coating by Q C S**
QCS is the County Council's in house team of specialists trained to undertake such a treatment
Contact Tim Holton for further details:
Email tim.holton@oxfordshire.gov.uk Phone: 01865 336370 Mobile: 07786 510430

- ◆ **If you don't want to use an in-house service, treatment can be obtained from Surefoot-uk**
Contact Karl Ward for further details:
Email: enquiries@surefoot-uk.co.uk Phone: 01484 608001 Mobile: 07881 582470



Further information:
Health and Safety Team

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