Falls on the same level similar to tripping and falling onto the floor, are the second leading cause of injury in the workplace. Only motor vehicle accidents result in more worker deaths. Falls to a lower level similar to falling off a desk, are the fourth leading cause of workplace injuries. Slips, trips and falls send more than seven million Americans to hospital emergency rooms every year—far more than any other cause of injury.

Any situation that can cause someone to lose balance can result in a fall. This includes objects left in walkways; improper use of ladders; wet, greasy or uneven surfaces; blocked vision and inattention while walking.

Basic prevention to avoiding slips, trips and falls is to watch your step. You can do this by turning on lights when going into a room; paying attention to what is in your path; avoiding carrying loads in ways that block your vision; shortening your stride on damp surfaces; and adjusting your pace and stride when the type of walking surface changes.

Using safeguards will minimize your exposure to injuries arising from slip, trip and fall incidents. Avoid shortcuts—stick with established walking routes and always follow safety rules.

**Floors**
Clean up spills immediately—even a small splash of water or coffee on the floor can lead to a fall. Clearly identify any hazards (spills) that cannot be removed immediately. Surround spills with a barrier to help contain them. Have pan and buckets near places where drips or leaks may occur.

**Walkways**
Keep walkways, stairs, and exits clear of stored materials and other obstructions. Avoid running hoses, wires, cables, and ropes across walkways. Bundle and store them safely out of the way when not in use. Make sure trash and scrap end up in the proper receptacle, not on the floor. Close file cabinets and drawers immediately after using them to avoid a tripping hazard.

**Stairs**
Use handrails when going up or down stairs. Take only one step at a time. Be sure you can see clearly where you are placing your feet. Slow down. Report broken stairs or handrails and loose stair coverings.

**Ladders**
Always use a straight ladder, stepladder or step stool to reach high objects—never a chair, box or a desktop. Do not stand on the pail shelf, topcap, or the step below the topcap of a step ladder, or the top three rungs of a straight ladder. Do not reach out too far—keep your belt buckle between the rails of the ladder.

When placing a ladder, check to see that it is positioned firmly on a level surface before climbing. Place the base of a straight ladder out one foot for every four feet of the ladder’s height. Side rails of a straight ladder shall extend not less then 36-inches above the upper landing surface to which are are climbing. When such an extension is not possible, the ladder should be secured at its top to a rigid support that will not deflect, and a grasping device, such as a grab-rail, should be provided to assist employees in mounting and dismounting the ladder.

Always face the ladder when climbing and descending. Keep at least three points of contact:
two feet and a hand, or two hands and a foot. To keep hands free for climbing, carry equipment in a tool belt or haul it up with a rope tied to a bucket or bag.

Injury prevention is much easier than injury recovery. The additional time taken to properly perform an action is significantly shorter, less expensive, and far less of a hassle than rehabilitating an injured body part.

**Cal/OSHA INSPECTIONS**

Is your agency prepared for a Cal/OSHA inspection? Do your employees know what to do? What can happen if you refuse to allow Cal/OSHA access to your facilities? Having a procedure established before Cal/OSHA pays a visit can minimize the amount of interruption to normal business.

Cal/OSHA is authorized to conduct workplace inspections to enforce occupational safety and health standards. Every workplace covered by Cal/OSHA may be subject to inspection by compliance safety and health staff. Cal/OSHA safety engineers and industrial hygienists from district offices throughout California conduct inspections.

Cal/OSHA cannot inspect every workplace each year, so it focuses its inspection resources on the most hazardous workplaces in the following order of priority: Imminent danger situations; fatalities and catastrophes; employee complaints; referrals; follow-ups; and planned or programmed investigations. Planned or programmed inspections focus on high-hazard industries and workplaces with process safety requirements (e.g., gaseous chlorine and acrolein).

California employers have many different responsibilities under the California Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1973, and Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations. The following represents some of the most important ones:

- Establish, implement, and maintain an Injury and Illness Prevention Program and update it periodically to keep employees safe.
- Inspect the workplace to identify and correct unsafe and hazardous conditions.
- Make sure employees have and use safe tools and equipment, and properly maintain this equipment.
- Use color codes, posters, labels, or signs to warn employees of potential hazards.
- Establish or update operating procedures and communicate them so employees follow safety and health requirements.
- Provide medical examinations and training when required by Cal/OSHA standards.
- Report immediately by telephone or fax to the nearest Cal/OSHA Enforcement Unit district office any serious injury, illness, or death, of an employee occurring in a place of employment or in connection with any employment as required by section 342(a), Title 8, California Code of Regulations (T8CCR). Serious injury or illness is defined in section 330(h), T8CCR.
- Keep records of work-related injuries and illnesses. Post a copy of the totals from the last page of the Log 300 during the entire month of February each year, if the employer has 11 or more employees.
- Post, at a prominent location within the workplace, the Cal/OSHA poster informing employees of their rights and responsibilities.
- If required to keep one, provide employees, former employees, and their representatives, access to the Log and Summary of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, Cal/OSHA Form 300, at a reasonable time and in a reasonable manner.
- Provide access to employee medical records and exposure records to employees or their authorized representatives.
- Provide the Cal/OSHA enforcement personnel with names of authorized employee representatives who may be asked to accompany enforcement personnel during an inspection.
- Do not discriminate against employees who exercise their rights under the California OSH Act.
- Post Cal/OSHA citations at or near the work area involved. Each citation must remain posted until the violation has been corrected, or for three working days, whichever is longer. Post abatement verification documents or tags.
- Correct cited violations by the deadline set in the Cal/OSHA citation, and submit required abatement verification documentation.
Do you have a long commute to work and/or drive a lot during work? Check out these tips for improving your comfort while driving.

**Good Design**

A good car seat should have the following:

1. Adjustable backrest angle or incline
2. Adjustable seat bottom depth (to accommodate various heights)
3. Adjustable seat height
4. Adjustable seat tilt
5. Adequate seat cushioning (firm, yet comfortable)
6. Adjustable lumbar support (height and depth)
7. Adjustable armrests on both sides
8. Adjustable head restraint with neck roll
9. Adequate shock absorption in the seat bottom (dampens 1-20 Hz)
10. Seat bottom slider to adjust the distance from the pedals

**Useful Adjustment Options**

When looking for a vehicle that offers comfort, consider the following:

1. **Seat tilt angle**: Allows you to tilt the seat forward so that it doesn’t press into the backs of your knees.
2. **Lumbar cushion**: Look for a seat that offers good lower back support, and an inflatable lumbar cushion so you can adjust it for your comfort.
3. **Armrests**: Look for armrests that are adjustable and provide adequate cushion.

**Healthy Back Driving Habits**

1. **Adjust Your Seat**: Take the time to adjust your seat to fit you. Adjust the height, distance, and the backrest angle so you are comfortable.
2. **Change Your Posture**: Remember to move around in your seat to alleviate postural fatigue.
3. **Take Breaks**: Avoid fatigue and discomfort by taking frequent breaks that allow you to stand up and move around.

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4. **Seat Accessories**: Use any of the available accessories, such as lumbar supports, fleece covers, or beaded seat covers to add to your driving comfort.

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Risk Management Staff

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The deadline to submit a nomination for the H.R. LaBounty Safety Awards Program is **October 1, 2013**. You may complete a nomination form at the following link: [http://www.acwajpia.com/SafetyAwards.aspx](http://www.acwajpia.com/SafetyAwards.aspx)