

HSENI advice on Slips, Trips and Falls from Height

HSENI and the 11 Councils in Northern Ireland have partnered to deliver a Health and Safety awareness-raising initiative, launched in April 2017, focusing on slips, trips and falls from height.

Slips, trips and falls from height continue to cause accidents, injuries and fatalities in many different types of workplaces in Northern Ireland. Between 2011 and 2016, falls were the biggest single cause of workplace fatalities in Northern Ireland. The total number of deaths during this period as a result of work related falls represents one third of the total workplace fatalities.

HSENI Deputy Chief Executive, Louis Burns said: ***"The majority of work-related slip, trip and fall accidents are preventable by adopting simple steps to manage risks in the workplace. The process should begin with a risk assessment covering all areas to consider what risks in your workplace may lead to slip or trip or fall injuries.***

You should then decide what suitable and effective control measures will prevent these types of accidents and put these control measures into practice".

Sinead Trainor, a Senior Environmental Health Officer/ Affordable Warmth Co-ordinator from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, said: ***"Slips, trips or falls from height are the most common causes of workplace accidents in Northern Ireland. In 2016/17 over 1/3 of reported workplace injuries resulted from slips, trips or falls from height; this is why we are jointly focusing attention on this area."***

There are many simple ways to control the risks of slips and trips and prevent accidents in your workplace, and the post-risk assessment preventative measures include:

For slips and trips

- Stop floors becoming contaminated

- Use the right cleaning methods

- Get the right footwear

Think about people and organisational factors - for example, consider how work is organised and managed, eg to avoid rushing, overcrowding, trailing cables.

For work at height

- Avoid working from height in the first place by carrying out the job at ground level

- Prevent a fall from occurring with edge protection and safe use of ladders

- Minimise the consequences of a fall with safety nets and other safety equipment

