

Common Workplace Accidents



The workplace can be a hazardous place and accidents can happen. The degree of the injury can be big or small depending on the kind of work. Providing a safe work environment is key in reducing the risk employees face in the workplace. Prevention is always better than cure.

This article has listed below several common accidents experienced in the workplace and how to prevent them. This article covers typical occupational accidents that apply to any industry.

1. Example of Accident

Here is one example of workplace accident in Asia related to "workplace accidents".

Case Study: Shop owner slipped in the kitchen and died from burn injuries

On the day of the accident, the deceased was working alone in the kitchen of her confectionery shop. While she was walking towards the wok filled with the preheated oil, she slipped.

As she fell, her leg knocked against a portable gas burner stand, causing the wok to slant and the pre-heated oil to spill onto her body and lower limbs.

The deceased suffered 80% burns and was conveyed to the hospital where she subsequently succumbed to her injuries.

The Deceased's cause of death was certified as "sepsis following extensive burns".



Portable Gas Burner Stand in Kitchen

Source: <https://www.tal.sg/wshc/resources/publications/case-studies/shop-owner-slipped-in-the-kitchen-and-died-from-burn-injuries>

2. Typical Occupational Accident Hazards

This article covers the following typical occupational accident hazards that can occur in any industry. It is a risk that can occur not only in factories and warehouses, but also in stores and offices.

- Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards
- Falling Objects
- Electrical Hazards

3. Slips Trips and Fall Hazards

Wet floors are the major culprits in slipping and tripping accidents. There are various other causes as well. Falling down the stairs is another common accident in the workplace. Slips, trips and falls can happen in any workplace, and should not be overlooked.

Slips, trips and falls can cause:

- Minor injuries such as sprains and strains.
- Broken bones due to the impact when trying to break the fall.
- Back injuries due to the impact from the fall.
- Cuts if the incident occurs near sharp objects.
- Head injuries if the person hits the head upon impact.
- Burns if the incident occurs near hot surfaces, or if the person is handling hot fluids.
- Fractures suffered in some cases. For example, a person may slip and fall off a chair or step when trying to handle an object at a high place.



Source: Shutterstock - Slip and Fall

The table below list some of the hazards associated with slips, trips and falls and examples of risk control measures that can take to minimize or eliminate the risks associated with these hazards.

Hazards	Examples	Risk Control Measures
Slippery floor	Entrance of toilet	<input type="checkbox"/> Place anti-slip mats or install non-slip flooring
Occasional Spills or Weather hazards	Water spills from pails during cleaning or Rainy weather	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean up the spills immediately. Place warning signs to warn of slippery surfaces (e.g., floors that have just been mopped)
Unstable walking surfaces	Loose floor tiles	<input type="checkbox"/> Repair or replace damaged floor/tiles as soon as possible. Place warning signs to warn of the damaged floor/tiles
Surface irregularities	Curled carpet	<input type="checkbox"/> Securing (tacking, taping, etc.) mats, rugs and carpets that do not lay flat
Obstacles within a walkway	Boxes, protruding objects, loose or uncovered cables	<input type="checkbox"/> Removing obstacles from walkways and always keeping walkways free of clutter
Changes in floor elevation	Steps, kerbs	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark kerbs and steps in bright colours (e.g., using luminous yellow/black stripes tape)
Poor workplace housekeeping	Water spills, Loose cable	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep floors and stairs clean and dry as much as possible
Insufficient lighting	Confined space, Underground	<input type="checkbox"/> Check work areas and staircases to ensure that they are well-lit
Distractions	Using a handphone while walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Advise employees not to use their handphones while walking
Carrying of bulky objects while walking	Transferring bulky documents	<input type="checkbox"/> Advise employees to use the lift or a trolley when carrying bulky objects



Source: Shutterstock - Clutter in office



Source: Shutterstock- Trip over Loose Cables

4. Falling Objects Hazards

Struck by falling objects is a common hazard across all industry sectors and had resulted in many cases of workplace injury. Falling objects from height can strike persons on the head and cause serious or even fatal injuries.

The table below list the hazards associated with falling objects and examples of risk control measures that can take to minimize or eliminate the risks associated with these hazards.

Hazards	Risk Control Measures
Materials are stacked too high and become unstable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Stacking the heaviest products on bottom shelves <input type="checkbox"/> Securing items to keep them in place (e.g., tying loose items together and/or keeping them in containers) <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring loads are stable and secured before lifting it off the shelves or transferring <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing employee training on correct stacking methods and how to spot unsafe storage and stacking and report
Damaged or geometrically incompatible material are stacked and become unstable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Materials that are bent, damaged or geometrically incompatible for stacking are isolated and not stored in stacks



Source: Shutterstock - Unstable Stacking



Source: Shutterstock - Falling Objects Signage

5. Electrical Hazards

Electricity is a necessary part of our daily life. It is an essential energy source in our workplaces for purposes from lighting to powering electrical equipment. While useful in many applications, working with electricity can cause significant danger or harm if mishandled. Electrical incidents can occur to anyone and can cause serious or even fatal injuries.

Types of electrical incidents include:

- Electric shock;
- Electrocutation;
- Electrical burns;
- Fire and/or explosion.



Source: Shutterstock - Electric Shock

The table below list some of the hazards associated with electrical hazards and examples of risk control measures that can take to minimize or eliminate the risks associated with these hazards.

Hazards	Risk Control Measures
Damaged electrical cords; Exposed wires; Defective equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use only power sockets and plugs and cables that meet the required safety standards will bear the “SAFETY Mark” <input type="checkbox"/> Engage only electrical workers who are licensed to carry out electrical work
Overloaded sockets or circuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do not overload electrical power points <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that electrical equipment are protected by over-current or overload protective devices such as circuit breaker
Improper Grounding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that electrical equipment is properly grounded if necessary. Proper grounding can reduce the risk of electrocution.
Wet or damp conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Keep power cords away from heat and water

6. Conclusion

Occupational accidents can occur in any workplace, not just factories and warehouses. This article has addressed typical occupational accident hazards.

A work-related accident or injury can not only put an employee out of work and affect their quality of life, but it can also damage an organization’s productivity and reputation - all of which can be very difficult to recover from.

In order to prevent occupational accidents, it is essential to provide necessary education to employees and to prepare a safe workplace. We would appreciate it if you could refer to this article when reconfirming that there is no problem with your current workplace.

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