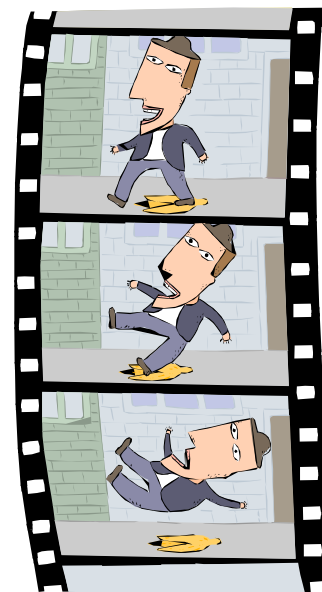




Preventing Falls, Slips and Trips

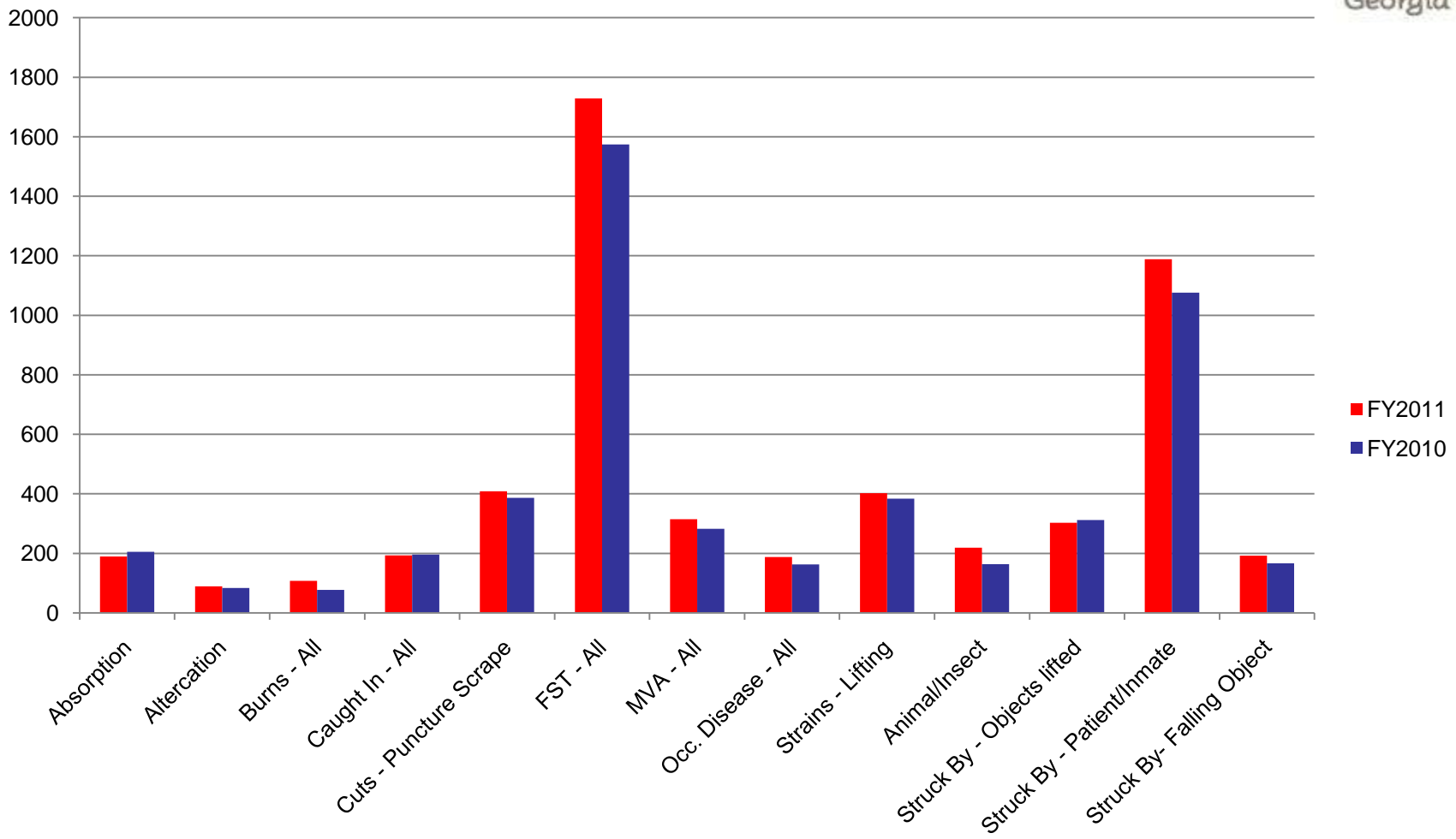
Falls/Slips/Trips (FSTs)

- You take hundreds of steps every day, but how many of those steps do you take seriously?
- Please take a few minutes to understand how Falls/Slips/Trips happen.
- YOU CAN PREVENT needless and painful injuries.

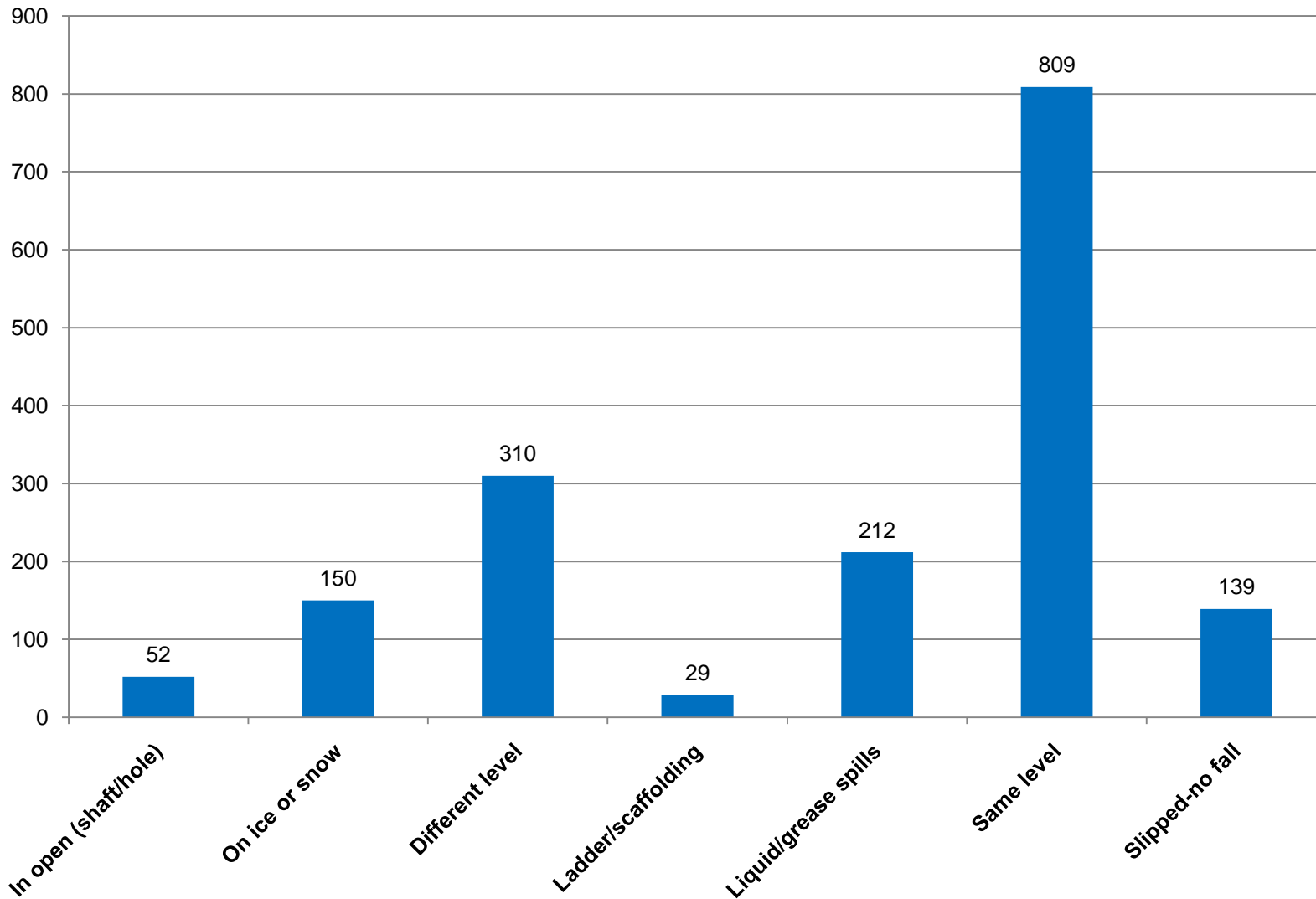


Falls/Slips/Trips accounted for over \$5,485,000 of Georgia's Workers' Compensation Injury costs, and over 25% of the total injuries for FY2011.

Top 15 Injuries in FY2011



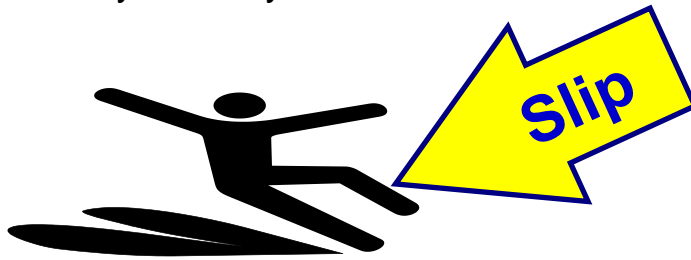
FY 2011 Fall, Slip, Trip Injury breakdown



Definition of FSTs

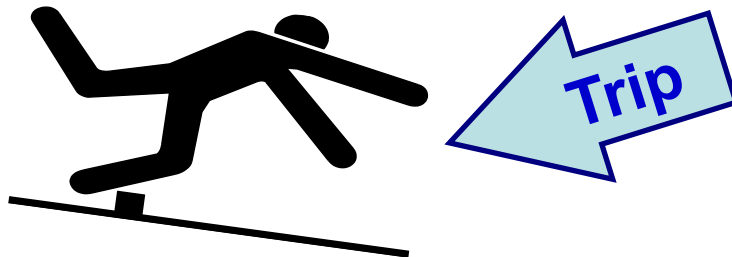


When there is too little friction or traction between your feet (footwear) and the walking or working surface, and you lose your balance.

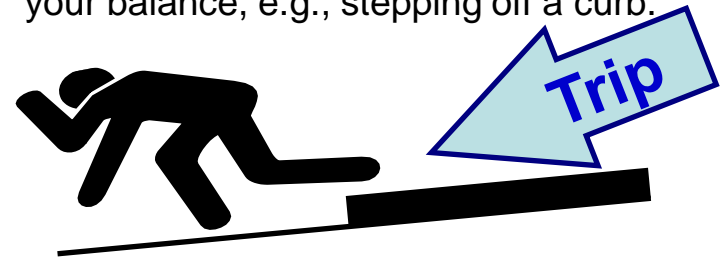


Occurs when you are too far off your center of balance.

When your foot (or lower leg) hits an object and your upper body continues moving, throwing you off balance.



When you step down unexpectedly to a lower surface (Misstep) and lose your balance, e.g., stepping off a curb.



Definition of FST Friction: The resistance encountered when an object (foot) is moved in contact with another (ground). Friction is necessary in order to walk without slipping.

Two Types of Falls

Fall-at-the-same-level

When you fall to the surface you are walking or standing on, or fall into or against objects at or above the surface.



Fall-to-lower-level

When you fall to a level below the one on which you are walking, working, or standing.



For example:

- Steps or stairs
- Ladder
- Platform
- Loading dock
- Truck bed



Can F/S/Ts be prevented?

- **YES!**
- We will discuss a few prevention strategies.
- Housekeeping, Footwear, Maintenance are the main three issues to be addressed.
- **HOWEVER, THE BIG #4 IS INATTENTION!**
Do not text while walking or on stairs. Look where you are walking. Use handrails while on stairs.

SLIP Prevention



- **Avoidance!** Go around when possible! The few seconds you save will not make up for hours of recovery from a fall.
- Weather conditions may cause the floors to be wet. Use caution at building entrances, parking lots and walkways.
- Watch where you are stepping and use caution on wet floors to avoid slipping.



Causes of Slips



- Ramps and gang planks without skid/slip-resistant surfaces
- Metal surfaces, such as duckboards and dock plates, platforms, construction plates or covers on sidewalks and roads



Metal has a lower force of friction/traction and can be more slippery than many other materials. Metal surfaces can become smooth and slippery with wear, and are extremely slick when wet, muddy, or greasy.

Causes of Slips



- **Mounting and dismounting trucks, tractors, heavy equipment, machinery**
- **Getting on and off truck trailers & truck beds**
- **Climbing up and down ladders**



Metal rungs, steps, footholds, treads, running boards, platforms on equipment and ladders become even slicker when worn, smooth and contaminated with water, mud, oil, grease, dirt, and debris.

Causes of Slips



- Loose, irregular surfaces, such as gravel
- Sloped or uneven terrain, sidewalks
- Muddy terrain
- Weather hazards: rain, sleet, ice, snow, hail, frost
- Leaves, pine needles, plant debris (especially if wet)



TRIP Prevention



- Make sure that steps you use often are in good shape and that items (that do not belong on the steps) are out of the way.
- Use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
- Damaged steps or misplaced items are major factors in trips. Report any problems to supervision or maintenance.



Causes of Trips and Missteps



Steep stairs (52-degree slope) with tall steps. Note that it is also missing a handrail on the left and a mid-rail on the existing one.

- Damaged steps
- Taller or shorter steps (varying rise – only takes $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch to cause a trip)
- Shallower tread depth
- Otherwise irregular



Over 2.5 million falls on stairways result in about 2 million disabling injuries yearly.

Trips in Parking Lots and Garages



Unmarked elevation changes:



Speed bumps



Curbs



Wheelchair
accessible ramp

- speed bumps
- curbs
- wheelchair accessible ramps
- driveways

FALL Prevention



- **Eliminate** the hazard when possible (i.e. broken chair, unstable ladder, etc...).
- Practice good judgment - Don't lean back in chairs.
- **DO NOT** climb on chairs, unstable shelving or tables.
- Make sure you can see your path of travel.

Housekeeping



- Close file cabinets or storage drawers
- Cover cables that cross walkways
- Keep work areas and walkways well lit
- Replace burned out bulbs
- AVOID using improper cleaning methods (e.g., incorrectly using wax or polish; or trying to clean up grease spill with water).



Housekeeping **DON'Ts**.....



- Propping fire doors open.
- Storing materials in stairwells.
- Storing trash cans in front of the doorway.
- Using cinderblocks to prop open the doors.

Do.....
Report these dangers!

FOOTWEAR



- Use good judgment with regard to footwear while on duty.
- Be certain footwear is in good condition and appropriate to your job function and outside weather conditions.
- Match the shoe to the hazards. Use steel toes and steel soles where necessary.

Human Factors Increasing the Risk of Slips And Trips Footwear



Taps on heels



Slick smooth-surfaced soles



High heels

Footwear that may not be suitable for the environment (reduced traction)



Behaviors

- **Behaviors** – actions you choose and control can contribute to a slip, trip, and fall injury if you set yourself up for one.
- **Carrying or moving** cumbersome objects, or too many objects that obstruct your view, impair your balance and prevent you from holding onto handrails.
- **Inattentive Behavior**: walking, distractions (e.g., using cell phone, talking and not watching where you're going, etc.).
- **Taking shortcuts**: not using walkways or designated, cleared pathways, being in a hurry, rushing around.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



- If something is creating a potential fall, slip or trip hazard fix it (clean it up; move it).
- Place signs or barricade to warn others of the potential hazard.
- If you cannot fix it, contact building management so that they are aware of the problem.

Fall, Slip and Trip Hazard



PROBLEM

Slip: if it is wet outside and the mat is folded back, then the floor is getting wet instead of the mat absorbing the water.

Trip: the mat is folded back and someone could catch their foot on the mat and trip.

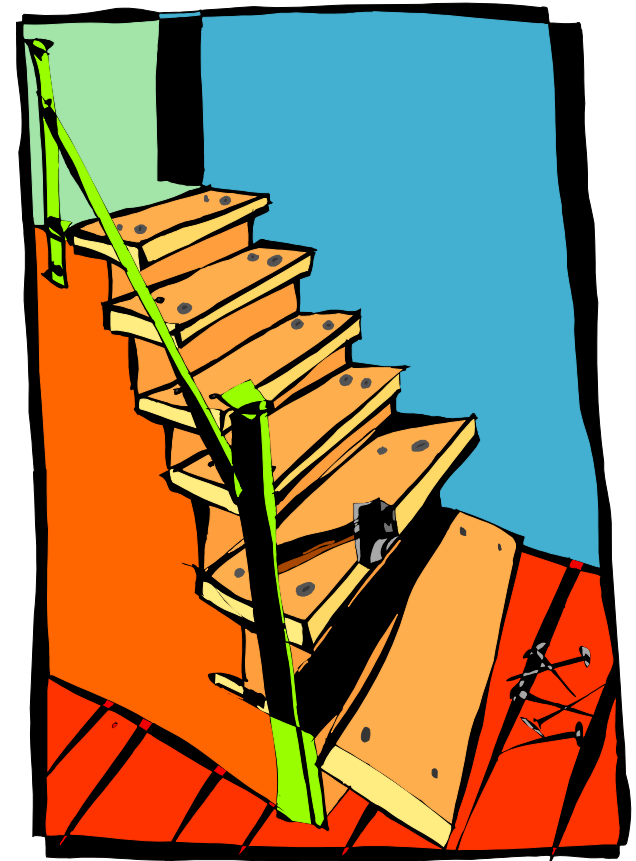
Fall: both a wet floor and caught foot could contribute to a fall.

FIX! Or Report this danger!

Notify Supervisor



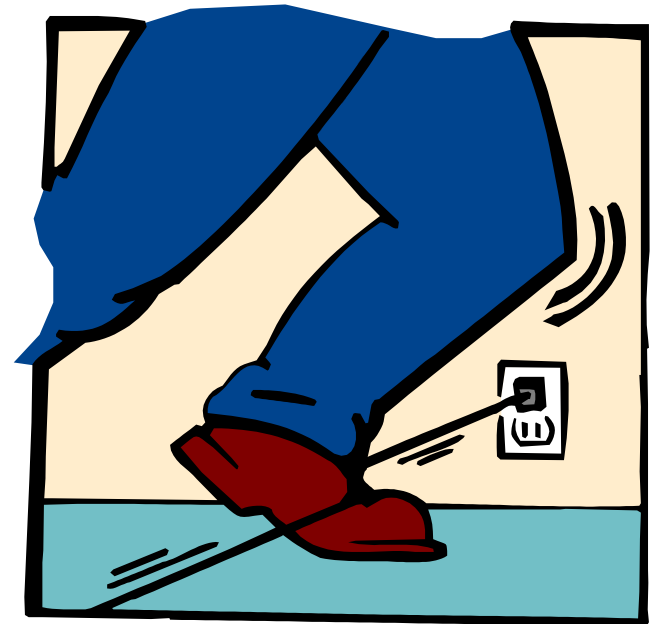
- Employees should immediately report all work related injuries to their supervisor.
- Report the unsafe conditions to the property management to get the problem fixed.
- Just a few items to think about as we go through the day to improve your Safety.
- **ALWAYS Think Prevention!**



OTHER HAZARDS



- Prevent a potential injury by cleaning up spills and wet floors.
- Keep aisles and walkways clear of clutter or obstructions.
- Pick up objects and move extension cords to eliminate the potential for injury.
- Secure loose rugs or mats.



Other Factors

- **Health and physical condition** can impair a person's vision, judgment, and balance.
- Eyesight, visual perception
- Age
- Physical state, fatigue
- Stress, illness
- Medications, alcohol, drugs



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