



Slips and trips

What is the issue?

The dairy and its environment includes many hazards that might cause slips and trips.

Why is it an issue?

Slips, trips and falls are the most common cause of injuries in all workplaces and make up the greatest number of WorkCover claims.

What are the consequences of ignoring it?

Slips and trips can cause serious injuries, including sprains and strains.

How safe is your dairy now?

Water or milk spills, algal build-up on concrete surfaces, oil on the floor in machine areas, feed in wet areas and manure all create potential slipping hazards.

Tripping can be caused by different floor levels, concrete lips, broken concrete, poorly located pipes and hoses, uncovered drainage holes and badly designed steps.

What can be done right now?

Trip and slip hazards can be reduced by good housekeeping. This should be emphasised to workers during their safety induction in the dairy.

Walkways, including access to the vat room and herd tester, should be well lit and clear of all slipping and tripping hazards.

Algae can be removed by water blasting. When cleaning up algae, remember to include areas that are perhaps only occasionally entered, such as the inner area of the rotary.

Oil leaks or spills should be cleaned up and contained.

When transporting, handling or decanting chemicals and oils, try to avoid spills and leaks onto floors and walkways. If they do occur, clean them up immediately.

Hoses and other obstacles should be moved along the walls and out of the way of pedestrians.

Many dairies have a bund or raised lip at the doorway to the dairy to contain spills and run-off. As this edge can be a tripping hazard, if it cannot be removed it could be made to stand out by applying brightly coloured paint that will catch people's attention.

Open drains or drainage holes, especially in the pit, should be covered with a firm flush-fitting grate.



Safety in the Dairy - Hazard sheet

Safety footwear, such as non-slip dairy gumboots, with slip-resistance and cushioning to reduce fatigue, can help prevent slips, but they must be appropriate for the job being done.

If introducing fatigue matting ensure it is non-slip and the edges are gradual.

What are the next steps?

Modifying a dairy to provide adequate light and ventilation will help dry up water on the floor quicker and reduce the growth of algae, thus reducing the chance of slipping.

In older herringbone dairies, it is common for the pit entrance to be narrow and in a poor condition; in some instances they have no stairs at all. It is important to make sure that the pit steps are of a solid construction - not loose bricks or boxes - with a uniform rise and fall, so that users can get up and down in a forward direction. The steps should be of a roughened surface, not smooth steel or concrete, and be supported by solid handrails.

In the cattle yard, there needs to be a balance between providing sufficient traction for the cows and easy cleaning. Existing concrete yards can be grooved and blasted to create a roughened, less-slippery surface for both cows and people.

When extending an existing dairy, try to ensure you don't end up with two levels and a potential baulking point for cattle and a tripping hazard for people.

What you should be considering longer term

When designing or renovating a dairy, relocate pipes and wiring along walls, rather than having them cross walkways, where they might be tripped on. If fences, gates or walls are removed, make sure any protrusions, such as dynabolts, in the concrete floor are removed rather than remaining as a tripping hazard.

What actions are not optional

Remove all slipping and tripping hazards from walkways.

Where to go for more information

WorkCover NSW Slips and trips FAQs	www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
Victorian WorkCover Authority	www.worksafe.vic.gov.au