

SafetyToolboxTalks

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Using Stairs

Most of us use stairways every day going up and down various levels either here at work or at home. We have done it for years and the problem is . . . we no longer think about the real danger in doing such. Falls on stairs is one of the most common incidents that occur both at work and at home.

With over 8 million people treated for fall-related injuries in 2004. Falls are the leading cause of nonfatal unintentional injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms, according to the All Injury Program, a cooperative program involving the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Recently we had incidents at two of our other plants where employees fell or tripped on steps and had recordable cases. One employee fractured their fibula.

One of the most important things you can do when ascending or descending stairs is to utilize the handrail. Holding on to the handrail give you a two points of contact and balance at all times. Here are some other tips:

- Never run up or down stairs

- Never read papers while using stairs.

- Focus on the stairs, not conversations or other distractions that may be present.

- Always look straight ahead when using stairs.

- Only take one step at a time.

- Get help if you have to carry something up or down stairs.

- Ensure you always have at least 1 hand free when using stairs.

- If the steps are located outside, be extremely careful if it is raining or snowing.