



**AMERIND Risk**  
*Tribes Protecting Tribes*



## TRIBAL WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWSLETTER

A message from  
the **Chief Executive Officer**

**Derek Valdo**

Guuwaadzi' Haubaa!

Falls, slips or trips caused 238,610 reported injuries throughout the U.S. in 2015, according to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Of those, 800 were fatal. Among AMERIND policyholders between 2011-2016, approximately 17 percent of injuries involved people slipping on wet surfaces or tripping over objects. The vast majority of injuries nationwide occur in service-providing industries. Tribal entities should take extra precaution to reduce risk. AMERIND Risk is committed to training your workforce to pay close attention to workplace surroundings, to implement prevention measures, and to cultivate a work culture that emphasizes safety leadership.

As a valued policy holder, we encourage you to take advantage of the exclusive benefits we offer at no added cost. Our safety team can provide you and your employees with a strategic approach to preventing worker injuries and improve workplace safety efforts by developing an employee safety plan consisting of key elements including management, leadership, commitment, hazard recognition, evaluation, control, communication, documentation, and employee involvement.

Call us today to inquire about these valuable added services and/or visit the "Services" tab on our website [AMERINDRisk.org](http://AMERINDRisk.org), to view the 2017 Safety Trainings Brochure.

As we kick off 2017, let us thank you again for choosing AMERIND Risk as your coverage provider. We were created 30 years ago to protect Indian Country and we are very passionate about helping you reduce workplace injuries.

Preparing and educating employees is one way to keep workplace injuries low and your premium costs affordable. By working together, **"Tribes Protecting Tribes"**.



## Don't Let Safety Slip Away

Every year, thousands of people are injured from slips, trips and falls in the home or workplace. Some fall from ladders or rooftops. Most fall from the same level, without elevation, due to loss of balance, tripping or slipping on a slick surface, or objects left carelessly on the floor. As a result, falls are among the top causes of disabling work injuries.

Fortunately, most trips and slips can be prevented rather easily and inexpensively. While various unsafe conditions can lead to trips, slips and falls, the best source of prevention is paying attention to what you're doing, where you're going, and what you encounter along the way.

### The Main Causes of Falls

- Slippery and uneven surfaces, especially icy, wet surfaces in parking lots and sidewalks during inclement and wintery weather
- Obstructions and trip hazards in walkways or on stairs
- Trip hazards due to materials left on floors from poor housekeeping
- Distraction or lack of awareness of surroundings, especially where there are elevation and contour changes on the ground and exterior surfaces

### What We Can Do to Prevent Slips

- If you encounter wet surfaces, especially during inclement weather, take shorter steps and walk slowly with caution.
- If you walk or work in wet areas such as cafés, water and chemical treatment and filtration facilities, consider floor matting or slip-resistant foot wear.
- Wipe up spills (even small ones) in areas like dining areas, lunchrooms and bathrooms – even if it is not your spill. Your co-workers will appreciate your efforts.
- Employers need to ensure work crews are prepared for inclement weather. Employees arriving early need to be careful, if inclement conditions are present.

### How to Protect Ourselves From Injuries and Potential Mishaps

The American Red Cross offers a few



recommendations:

- Walk in designated areas and avoid shortcuts.
- Make sure you can see where you are going – and look ahead. Adequate lighting helps as well.
- Carry only loads that do not hinder your movement or obstruct your vision.
- Keep all work areas and walkways clear of boxes, bags, papers, cords, etc. If you observe this condition, do not wait until someone gets hurt. Be a safety role model and fix it or report it.
- Watch for curled or ripped carpeting, chipped flooring, etc.

- Remind yourself to slow down and pay attention. Train yourself to stop and find a place to sit down when you need to chat while on the cell phone.

### Good Housekeeping

- Floor surfaces. Uneven or damaged surfaces are a major cause of trips and falls. These should be reported and addressed immediately.
- Lighting. If people can't see where they're going or what's ahead, they are more likely to make the wrong move.
- Obstructions. Materials, tools and debris left on the floor are accidents waiting to happen. Be especially careful of cords, cables and hoses on

the floor; never allow them to take up permanent residence in a walkway.

- Open drawers. Drawers left ajar often jut into sides and legs, sometimes knocking passersby to the floor. Implement a policy that all drawers must stay closed.
- Work areas. Tape off or ensure restricted access to work areas where people are doing construction, repair or special cleaning.
- Slippery surfaces. Wet and smooth surfaces are often slippery. Ice, which always seems to appear in unexpected places, is a common cause of painful slips.



## AMERIND Risk

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### Training and Awareness

As with every other aspect of workplace safety, all the inspections and planning in the world won't prevent accidents — unless workers are trained to understand risks and take responsibility for their own safety.

Make sure all employees are aware of what they have to do to prevent trips, slips and falls. Encourage them to assume responsibility, not only for their own safety, but for their co-workers' as well.

Every worker should be responsible for good housekeeping practices and for immediately reporting any problems

they see, such as carpet rips, broken tiles, spills on floors and plumbing leaks — especially around bathrooms, faucets, drinking fountains, etc.

### The Role and Influence of True Safety Leadership

Lastly, if you are a manager or supervisor, you have a significant influence on your organization's safety culture. The health and potential strength of that culture's ability to eliminate needless injuries relies heavily on your thoughtful actions, leadership decisions, and how you embrace safety values. Within any organization or workforce, there are individuals who

take the initiative to practice safety with precautionary measures that prevent slips, trips and falls. These employees wipe up spills on floors caused by others. They post caution signs alerting employees of slippery surfaces. They alert maintenance of a bathroom plumbing leak. Whatever action, these employees are safety role models and champions. Consider some expression of gratitude and acknowledgement for these individuals that reflects your commitment and passion for injury prevention. A safety culture is nurtured when good deeds are promoted to inspire greater and even safer deeds.

Find more safety tips at:



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