

# Walking in Winter

Fresh snow fall, packed snow, freezing rain, ice, snow-covered ice, rough frozen slush, snow stuck to your footwear and other winter conditions; we sometimes take these conditions for granted or our mind is somewhere else. This is when we are most vulnerable to slips & falls in winter conditions.

These are some pretty serious conditions to navigate through and not being fully alert and cautious can result in some pretty serious consequences. Slips and falls on Snow or Ice account for 10-50 worker compensation claims each year, totaling up to \$140,000.

Here are some tips to help keep you from slipping/falling in winter conditions:

- Focus on what you are doing – Walking! Stay off of your cell phone (i.e. texting/dialing/emailing) and be aware of the ground conditions as they can change rapidly.
- Although your hands might be cold, don't put them in your pockets when you are navigating wintry stretches. If you slip, you will need your arms to restore balance. If you fall, your arms will help you to break your fall and land safely. Wearing appropriate gloves/mittens will help prevent your hands from being cold.
- Wear the proper footwear. Although it may not be glamorous to wear a pair of winter boots, it will give you traction, not to mention keep your feet warm. If you want to wear heels, flats, cowboy boots, flip-flops or other kinds of shoes, simply carry an extra pair with you to change into. SRM's [Ice Gripper Program](#) offers free ice grippers to employees – check it out!
- If you think you are approaching a particularly slick area of snow or ice, don't be afraid to explore the area with your toe to see how slippery it is before you put your full weight on the area. **Better safe than sorry.**
- Find alternate routes to your destination that have less of an incline or are in better condition.
- Don't carry large loads while walking on snow or ice - you are asking for trouble! If you do carrying a load on an icy walk and feel yourself falling, toss your load so that you can break your fall with your arms.
- Take small careful steps instead of large ones - Walk like a penguin with small steps and shuffle your feet or keep them close to the ground. When getting out of a vehicle, step, don't jump. When possible, use handrails, handles - anything that will help you keep your balance. Never run.
- Avoid sudden movements – walk carefully and slowly.
- Allow for extra time to get to your destination. Moving slower will get you there more safely.



[Facilities Service Snow Removal Protocol and Quick Facts](#)  
[University Police Parking Areas Snow Removal Policy and Procedures](#)