



Protecting Workers and Preventing Slips & Falls

If they need to work outdoors, workers should wear the proper outerwear and footwear. Employees should layer clothing, avoid cotton fabrics and cover their skin.

Employee breaks should be managed to avoid overexposure and common cold weather hazards such as hypothermia and cardio stress from shoveling snow and ice.

Weather mats should be placed at all entrances for people visiting the facilities. The length of the mat needs to capture as much moisture off of shoes as possible (many times, purchased mats are too small to be effective). The Carpet and Rug Institute's (CRI) Carpet Maintenance Guidelines manual generally defines an entrance (or soil wipe-off area) as a 90 square feet (6 feet x 15 feet) area at building exterior entrances, where most of the tracked-in soil is deposited. CRI research shows that 80% of the soil brought into a building is trapped within the first 15 feet on a carpeted surface. The following considerations should be made:

- Keep porous mats outside so they absorb snow/ice from footwear.
- Use relatively rough mats in foyer areas.
- Use more absorbent walk-off mats to remove moisture.
- Change mats once saturated; walk-off mats should be cleaned frequently. Once a walk-off mat becomes filled with soil or liquid, the contaminant will then transfer to the soles of shoes and spread throughout the facility.
- Place shoe brushes at entrances to remove as much snow and ice as possible.
- Where applicable, provide space and facilities to allow employees to change footwear upon entering the building.
- Maintain floors and post caution signs where slip & fall conditions prevail.