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**Gouveia, Susan**

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**From:** Lashway, Lisa  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 10, 2014 10:49 AM  
**To:** Gouveia, Susan; Masser, Michelle  
**Subject:** FW: Morris JIF - SD Bulletin - Managing Slip & Falls during Winter Months  
**Attachments:** SD Bulletin Managing Slips Falls During Winter.pdf; PD snow poster and briefing.pdf

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**From:** Wilpert, Frank  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 10, 2014 9:44 AM  
**To:** Canning, Sean; Quinn, Tim; Lynch, James; Spitzer, Mark  
**Cc:** Department Heads  
**Subject:** FW: Morris JIF - SD Bulletin - Managing Slip & Falls during Winter Months

As Information  
To be shared with your staff

Frank W.

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**From:** Melissa Wade [mwade@jamontgomery.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 08, 2014 9:35 AM  
**To:** Cathleen A Kiernan PERMA; Jaine Testa PERMA  
**Cc:** David McHale; John J Zengel  
**Subject:** Morris JIF - SD Bulletin - Managing Slip & Falls during Winter Months

**A message from the JIF Safety Director's office:**

Winter is here and that means increased potential for slip and fall accidents due to weather conditions such as freezing rain, snow and ice. Public agencies in New Jersey must plan to protect their workers and visitors from slipping on icy surfaces.

The attached Safety Director's Bulletin offers suggestions for a comprehensive program to minimize the hazards to employees, residents, and visitors. Law enforcement officers are especially exposed to icy conditions in the performance of their duties. Also attached is a shift briefing and poster on slip prevention for law enforcement supervisors and officers.

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### Managing Slip & Fall Risks during Winter Months



Winter is here and that means increased potential for slip and fall accidents due to weather conditions such as freezing rain, snow and ice. Public agencies in New Jersey must plan to protect their workers and visitors from slipping on icy surfaces. This bulletin offers suggestions for a comprehensive program to minimize the hazards to employees, residents, and visitors.

A sound Snow and Ice Management Plan looks to remove snow and ice from all potential walking surfaces and incorporates continuous monitoring and removal before opening, at shift change, or when melting and refreezing occurs. Plans should be in writing and reviewed at the conclusion of every snow season. Pay special attention to common trouble spots; parking areas, sidewalks, and stairs & ramps. About one third of all slips on icy surfaces occur in parking areas.

If contractors are used for certain areas, verify they have the proper levels of insurance. Work with your Risk Manager so that the necessary Certificates of Insurance and Hold Harmless certificates are on file. Agencies should walk the areas to be cleared with contractors to identify features such as curb lines and speed bumps, drainage, etc. and plan how and where snow and ice will be controlled.

Investigate pre-treatments and anti-icing agents. The science of chemical agents and delivery methods is always evolving. Evaluate guidance on anti-icing product effectiveness, temperature use, advantages and disadvantages, environmental impact, and cost per coverage area when making a determination.

The same planning will need to be conducted if snow and ice control will use agency employees. The Safety Director recommends diagramming the areas, marking curbs, fire hydrants, speed humps, and other items. This also facilitates updating your plans.

When possible, roof downspouts should be directed into underground drains versus being directed onto walkways, driveways, or other walking surfaces that could freeze.

Frequently inspect the parking area and sidewalks for:

- Lighting – well illuminated areas permit greater visibility to avoid icy areas
- Drainage – melt that cannot drain to sewers or grass will become ice when it refreezes
- Dislocated / damaged items – curbs, wheel blocks and similar items are frequently moved or damaged by plows, making new and unfamiliar hazards to users

Also inspect vehicles that step treads, running boards, grab bars, and lift gates are in good condition.

*This bulletin is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization's policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor. For further information regarding this bulletin, contact your Safety Director at 877.398.3046.*

### **Consider these best practices:**

- Monitor weather forecasts. Do not be caught unaware of impending winter weather.
- When possible, parking lots should be barricaded and completely plowed and treated before permitting vehicles to park. This will prevent patches of ice between vehicle which present an ongoing slip and fall hazard to employees and visitors as they must climb over them when entering and exiting vehicles.
- Plan where to pile snow. Subsequent melting-refreezing cycles can create icy patches.
  - Do not block drains and downspouts
  - Pile on the low side of walkways so run-off does not flow across paths of travel
  - Do not create obstacles to pedestrian access areas such as bus stops, fire exits
  - Utilize grassy areas so run-off is absorbed into the ground
- Talk to employees often about your commitment to preventing slip and fall injuries. Encourage them to report icy conditions and other concerns. Publically acknowledge and thank those who do. Consider establishing a slip-trip-fall prevention committee during winter months to focus on these hazards.
- Discuss footwear with employees. Does your policy permit reasonable exceptions to office shoes for icy conditions? For employees who must work outside, there are many add-on devices to improve traction. Any employee clearing snow and ice should be encouraged to wear such devices. Consider them as personal protective devices. Inspect work boots to verify soles are in acceptable condition.
- Establish a monitoring system to spot black ice. Special attention should be given to walking surfaces during early morning hours, at shift change or prior to employee and visitor arrival.
- Provide salt / sand at entrances and expect employees to protect their welfare and the safety of visitors by using it, and not waiting for someone else.
- Do not overlook lobbies and other entrances. Provide a sufficient number of caution or wet floor signs for vulnerable areas. Entrances should have recessed gridding or mats to scrape / clean shoe bottoms. Entrances should be monitored throughout the day and dry moped as needed.
- Transitioning from outside to inside presents different hazards. Pedestrians need to adjust their gait as they move from outside walks to inside flooring. Remind workers to walk with short, deliberate steps where the mid-foot strikes the ground first (not the heel). Eyes must also adjust from outdoor light (and glare) conditions to interior lighting.
- Slips at the heel are the most common slip occurrence. When walking in slippery conditions, the body should be centered over the feet. Pay attention; do not become distracted with your phone, reaching for keys, etc. Avoid walking with your hands in your pockets or carrying large objects. Use railings whenever possible.
- Remind workers to look before getting out of vehicles. If the area is coated with ice, they may want to park in a different spot. Test potentially slippery surfaces by tapping with a foot before committing to them. Use the vehicle for support. Face the vehicle and use the 3-Points of Contact Rule. Always have both hands on the car as stepping into or out of the vehicle.

**Danger lies just outside your door**



**Watch your step**

**Maintain 3 points of contact**

## ***Police Slipping on Ice - Shift Briefing***

Every year police departments in New Jersey experience significant losses from police officers slipping on ice or snow, often when getting out of their patrol vehicles. In 2011, The JIF / MEL system experienced over 100 police officer injuries from slips on ice, totaling over \$1.7M.

Responses increase during inclement weather, which means the number of opportunities for a slip-trip and fall also increases. A fall which leads to a back injury can cause a lifetime of pain and limitations. Here are some tips to minimize slip-trip and fall injuries:

- **Use 3-Points of Contact when exiting / entering vehicles**

Much like climbing a ladder, officers should face the vehicle and hold on with both hands as stepping into or out of the vehicle. Only let go of the vehicle when both feet are firmly on the ground or in the vehicle.

- **Be aware when positioning vehicles on arrival**

Officers have many factors to consider as they approach a scene.

On non-emergency incidents, officers can take a few seconds to best position and park their vehicles. Note the location of potholes, loose surfaces, curbs, and other features that could cause you to lose your footing when exiting the vehicle. Available lighting is another consideration.

On motor vehicle stops, use the PA if necessary to direct the other vehicle to a safe location.

Emergency incidents such as motor vehicle crashes present additional challenges. Officers must make a quick evaluation of the scene as they approach and consider traffic, downed wires, etc. During cold weather, and to the extent possible, officers must also consider icy patches, snow, etc. in your size-up. You can not help if you are injured. Your safety has to be the initial priority and is worth a second or two of consideration as you arrive.

- **Shoe / boot selection during winter months**

Officers may wish to invest in a second pair of boots especially designed for icy conditions. Select a softer plastic sole with an aggressive lug pattern for better traction.

Whether you invest in a second pair or not, if your boots' soles are worn, replace them.

- **Have a plan for the police station lot and walkways**

Work with the local Public Works to make sure the parking lots and sidewalks used by officers are the top priority. Supply salt at the entrances and throughout the lot during winter months. Supervisors and officers must be willing to take immediate actions, such as spreading salt or shoveling sidewalks, to correct unsafe conditions for the officers before Public Works or similar agencies can arrive to take more comprehensive actions.