



Employee Safety

Get a Grip on Winter Weather Injuries with SureWerx Ice and Snow Traction Aids

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Injuries from slips, trips and falls are the most common source of workplace injuries and a frequent reason for compensation claims. Here's how *SureWerx ice cleats* can save you money by cutting down on costly fall injuries.

During the winter, when temperatures plummet in some U.S. states, snow, sleet and ice are a leading safety hazard.

Wetter weather means wet streets, walkways and surfaces, and the increased possibility of slips, trips and falls at work.

According to the National Safety Council, falls are one of the leading causes of unintentional injuries in the United States, accounting for **more than 8 million visits to the emergency room each year**.

Falls are the second most expensive cause of disabling workplace injuries in the U.S., **costing businesses \$10.84 billion annually** in medical and lost-wage expenses.

"They are so far ahead of their savings every year that the program pays for itself many times over just by preventing accidents."

Curt Ranum
SureWerx

These injuries can have a damaging impact on the efficiency and productivity of your facility.

Read more: Winter Safety Hazards in Manufacturing: 5 Ways to Stay Safe at Work

Preventing Slips, Falls and Injuries

How do these injuries happen? Perhaps a worker leaves a facility to retrieve an object from outside, walking across unseen patches of ice or snow, or someone crosses a dangerously icy parking lot to begin an early shift on a dark and cold morning.

These falls can happen in even the most seemingly innocuous places, leading to disability or a long period of recovery. You may mitigate these risks by using salt or ice melt to ensure your driveways and walkways are clear of dangerous ice. Another way to avoid these falls is to equip your workers with appropriate anti-slip footwear.

Ice cleats are designed to help people walk safely on slippery surfaces such as ice and snow. They are fitted over boots or work shoes to provide additional traction.

The potential for falls related to cold weather is substantial: 35 U.S. states see average annual snowfall of over 10 inches, and 88.5 million workers were employed in these states as of September 2019, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

SureWerx produces a line of **ice and snow traction aids**—including the K1 Series Mid-Sole, the K1 Series Heelstop Ice Cleats and the Due North Full-Sole Ice Cleats—that reduce slip and fall injuries that can happen in snowy and icy conditions. These traction aids come in mid-sole, heel and full-sole versions, providing much-needed grip in a variety of treacherous conditions.

The graphic displays three types of traction aids on a tan boot sole: **MID-SOLE**, **HEEL**, and **FULL-SOLE**. Below these are two categories: **Transitional Traction** and **All Day Traction**, with a large blue arrow pointing from left to right. The **Transitional Traction** section lists: "Great for situations that require lots of indoor/outdoor transition such as:" followed by a bulleted list: "Couriers/drivers", "Office workers in parking lot", and "Homecare providers". The **All Day Traction** section lists: "Great for situations that require lots of all day traction such as:" followed by a bulleted list: "Construction", "Rail workers", and "Mailmen". At the bottom, logos for partner brands are shown: JACKSON, sellstrom, Kneepro, K1, duenorth, PEAKWORKER, PIONEER, ADA SOLUTIONS, and AIF. A page number "12" is in the bottom right corner.

SureWerx’s mid-sole, heel and full-sole traction options. (Image courtesy of SureWerx)

What are the benefits to your facility? Consider these calculations: The average workers’ compensation claim from a slip or fall is almost \$48,000, and the average retail price of a pair of **SureWerx cleats** is \$30. If just one accident is prevented each year, a company can outfit 1,600 employees with a pair of ice cleats and break even on costs, says Curt Ranum, business development manager at SureWerx.

“One of our largest and oldest customers is a railroad operator here in the United States, and they outfit 50,000 outdoor workers with our ice cleats at \$30 per pair,” he says.

“So they are spending a lot of money on traction, but think what they’ve received back in accident prevention savings—medical, lost time, workers’ compensation, all the things that contribute to the cost of a slip and fall,” Ranum says. “They are so far ahead of their savings every year that the program pays for itself many times over just by preventing accidents.”

Of course, not all slips and falls happen outside a facility. A worker may track ice, snow or water in from the outside, making the floors inside dangerously slick.

Ensuring you have nonslip flooring mats is a good way to safeguard your facility from the dangers of floor moisture, and so are SureWerx’s Due North Indoor/Outdoor Spikeless Traction Aids, which feature specially designed treads that channel water away to deliver enhanced traction on wet and icy surfaces.

These products fit snugly over boots and shoes and provide an extra grip to workers frequently transitioning from outdoor to indoor surfaces without damaging a facility’s walking surface.

Outside of the winter months, items such as chemical lubricants or dust may fall on the facility floor, making it dangerous to walk on. SureWerx's Spikeless Traction Aids can help in those scenarios, too, ensuring your workers don't slip and become needlessly injured, Ranum says.

"I work a lot of safety trade shows, and I talk to a lot of safety officers, and it's just endless the number of different things you hear about that wind up on the facility floor as a byproduct of whatever manufacturing process is underway," he says.

The traction aids have 22 patented high-visibility chevrons per pair that are strategically placed to increase grip and reduce the risk of slips and falls.



SureWerx's Due North Indoor/Outdoor Spikeless Traction Aids. (Image courtesy of SureWerx)

Protecting the Workforce During Winter

Headquartered in both Chicago and Vancouver, British Columbia, SureWerx is a leading manufacturer of innovative safety, tools and equipment products and solutions. The company supplies safety products to the metalworking, healthcare, construction, food processing, commercial and manufacturing sectors.

In September, the company launched its *Traction Resource Center*, a site devoted to providing resources and information about ice traction safety to help keep workers safe while working on ice and snow.

The site's aim is to provide customers with safety solutions, protecting against on-the-job injuries related to slippery winter conditions. The site features products from the company's K1 Mid-Sole ice cleat brand and Due North, the industry leader in full-sole and heel traction aids. It will also include testimonials, industry information and a calculator to help organizations estimate the cost savings they could attain by outfitting their outdoor workers with traction aids.

"We take work safety and slip prevention seriously at SureWerx," says Ryan Pattee, senior director of traction aids at SureWerx.

"We understand the true financial costs associated with slip-related injuries and believe most accidents can be prevented with effective ice cleats and educational resources for dealing with treacherous working conditions."

What is your shop doing to deal with slips, trips and falls, particularly during the winter months? Share your thoughts and insights in the comments below.

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