

**Stop Winter
Falls**



**Walk like a
penguin**

Winter Walking Safety

Winter walking falls are a serious safety hazard. Employee falls result in bruises, sprains and broken bones. The University of Rochester employs over 20,000 staff, most of whom walk some distance to the building they work in; that is oodles of opportunity for injury.

Snow Removal. When the temperatures drop, snow, ice and even slush result in falls. Late morning snowfall (Lake Effect) often covers over the late night and early hours work of grounds staff, so exercise caution in parking lots and sidewalks during snow events. With only a light wind, a little snow can cover pathways in minutes and create a slippery surface.

Black Ice. Dew or water vapor can freeze on cold surfaces, forming an extra-thin, nearly invisible layer of ice. No matter how well the snow and ice is removed from parking lots or sidewalks, pedestrians will still encounter slippery surfaces in winter. Grounds has a **SNOW & ICE REMOVAL HOTLINE at x5-0000**. Call the hotline to report hazardous walking conditions. Grounds will not only act on the information, they will enter it into a database maintained specifically to identify problem areas for the future.

Footwear. The single most important thing you can do for your safety is to wear weather appropriate footwear. Boots with rubber soles and non-slip tread are great; grippers, traction cleats or “Yaktrax” are another excellent idea. Nothing is foolproof, but the right footwear provides slip resistance. You will appreciate the difference!

Defensive Walking. Just like being a “defensive driver” to avoid incidents, become a “defensive walker” to avoid winter slips, trips and falls.

- Plan ahead to ensure sufficient time to reach your destination
- Wear boots with non-slip tread.
- Use care getting in and out of your vehicle. Hold onto the door frame to steady yourself.
- Assume all wet and dark areas on pavement are slippery and icy.

- Walk in designated walkways. Avoid “off-sidewalk short-cuts” – which do not receive maintenance.
- Don’t text & walk at the same time.
- Use available handrails.
- Try not to carry items in your arms that can cause you to be unbalanced
- Walk Like A Penguin:
 - Walk flat footed
 - Take short steps or shuffle for stability
 - Concentrate on maintaining your balance
 - Keep your head up and don’t lean forward
 - Shorten your stride and walk slowly to safely navigate an icy path
 - Point your feet out slightly to increase stability
 - Keep your arms at your sides (not in your pockets) to maintain balance
 - Do the penguin shuffle

Facilities Snow Removal webpage: Check the forecast and learn more about the snow removal process at the Facilities Snow Removal webpage:

https://www.facilities.rochester.edu/support_ops/grounds.php

Environmental Health & Safety Winter Walking Safety Tips

<http://www.safety.rochester.edu/safetyinfo/winterwalkingsafety.html>

Employee Incident Form If you do fall, fill out an Employee Incident Form at

<http://www.safety.rochester.edu/SMH115.html>.

Environmental Health & Safety

Horticulture & Grounds