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HOW TO GET THE SAFEST FLOOR WITH WATCO

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Watco products can help with health and safety all around your premises, inside and out

Floors, steps and ramps can present slip and trip hazards and need to be checked periodically to make sure they are safe for staff and visitors. The number of accidents involving slips and trips is alarmingly high, many resulting in claims. Outside, in the car park, around the loading bay, or on the walkways and steps leading into the building, there is the added hazard of wet or icy surfaces.

Watco products have been tried and tested for years, preventing accidents and making thousands of premises, just like yours, safer places.

This guide will help you to identify potential hazards throughout your premises and recommend which Watco product can help. We will be looking at...

FLOORS

- Trip hazards
- Slippery surfaces
- Outside areas
- Roof access areas

STEPS & RAMPS

- Trip hazards
- Slippery steps
- Step nosings and DDA compliance





Floors get used, often getting constant wear and tear. Wear on a concrete floor will cause dusting and erosion to the point that the aggregate in the concrete becomes exposed. This gets progressively worse as vehicles, trolley wheels and forklifts just carry on eroding it. Holes form and joint edges break causing trip hazards.

FLOORS TRIP HAZARDS

HOLES

Watco Concrex® is a heavy-duty epoxy resin repair mortar. It is resin rich, so strong that a hole or trip hazard in a floor can just be swept out and then filled with Concrex®, smoothing out to a feather edge around the repair. It is much stronger than concrete – a Concrex® repair is a permanent repair.

JOINTS

The superior strength of Watco Concrex® means that it can be used for thin section (5mm thick) repairs, or repairs to vulnerable impact points, such as broken expansion joint edges or step nosings. Use it where conventional mortars would fail. Benefit from a product which is easy to mix and use, does not usually require a primer and dries quickly so you can get you area back into use.

ERODED WORN AREAS

With the surface of the concrete floor dusting and eroding with use, trolleys and forklifts can rattle and bump as they hit exposed aggregate and rough, worn patches.

PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE

If the above is tolerable, but you don't want it to get worse, halt any further deterioration and damage with Watco Universal Sealer Dustproofer. This is a highly effective and economical way of hardening the bare, dusty concrete so it will not

wear further. It's also one of our easiest to apply products; just tip the water-based, virtually odourless solution straight onto the concrete, push around with a soft broom and then leave overnight to dry. It will never need re-treatment.

RESURFACE

If the worn floor is not tolerable, perhaps things are falling off trolleys and pallets as they rattle over the rough surface, it can be made smooth and dust free using Watco Flowtop®. 'Simply pour a new floor' with Watco Flowtop®.

Minimal preparation is required, little more than a good sweep. The Flowtop® is mixed using a drill and mixer in the container we supply and then just poured onto the rough concrete surface. You help spread it and roller it, and by the following day you have a new, smooth non dusting surface – far harder and stronger than the old concrete floor.



SLIPPERY SURFACES

It is essential that floors are not allowed to become slippery in the workplace, or at least that efforts have been made to make them safe. The first sign of a possible slip problem is usually a comment made by a member of staff or visitor. Once the report has been made, the floor should be looked at and some action taken.

SMOOTH PAINTED SURFACES

Sometimes very little action is required; a smooth painted floor can often become slippery if it has become a little greasy or oily. Perhaps a spillage, or a lubricant has leaked from a piece of equipment. This can easily get transferred around the floor on shoes or tyres, making it slippery. Or, if the floor is washed using an ineffective cleaner that does not break down the grease or oil, it just gets smeared over the floor leaving a thin, slippery film.

Watco Bio-D is a powerful water-based degreaser which breaks down grease and oil. Our customers often find that regular cleaning with Watco Bio-D is enough to keep their floors safe and that no further action is required. It's safe and simple to use, virtually odourless and it's bio-degradable. It is so powerful that it can be diluted ten times with water for effective cleaning of large areas.



CLEAN BUT STILL SLIPPERY!

The floor may be clean, but still slippery. A smooth painted floor can quickly and easily be a slip hazard if even a small amount of water gets onto it. For example, warehouse areas with the roller shutter open see rain driven in or wet vehicles come in and drip over the floor. The water soon gets distributed by feet and forklifts.

A slip resistant coating is required to make a slippery painted or smooth concrete floor safe. Non slip floors are often resisted, since they include grit to make them anti-slip and this makes them so difficult to clean. And if they can't be cleaned, the gritty surface clogs with dirt or oil and the floor becomes slippery again.

We are often asked if we make an anti-slip floor coating which is easy to keep clean. We do! Watco Safety Coat achieves this using polymer bead additive. The beads are not sharp, unlike grit, so do not catch on mops or floor wipes. This unique feature also results in a finely textured very even finish which also helps make cleaning easier.

You can confidently make large areas of smooth slippery floors safe, without ending up with a floor that can't be easily kept clean and safe.

Watco Safety Coat Coarse is available for very wet areas. The polymer beads are larger and more suited to constantly wet or 'puddled' areas.

Watco Safety Coat Hygienic is also available. The addition of Silver Ion Technology resists bacterial and fungicidal growth providing a floor surface which is clean, anti-slip and hygienic.



HEAVILY CONTAMINATED WITH OIL OR GREASE

All floors which are smooth, old or rough can be dangerous if they get very greasy or oily. Areas around equipment, along a production line, or in a wash-down area can be particularly hazardous.

Watco Safety Grip® is a heavy duty, one coat, high build non slip coating. It contains a sharp aggregate which keeps the floor safe in extreme conditions. It is a highly durable, two-part, 100% solids epoxy, supplied in a kit which covers 5m² for application by roller. The advantage is that it will keep staff and visitors safe, perhaps a disadvantage is that it is less easily cleaned than the fine surface texture of Watco Safety Coat. That's why we supply it as a unit that covers only 5m² and as much or as little aggregate can be included to achieve the desired level of slip resistance. Use it sparingly where safety really matters.

Watco Safety Grip® is a great product to have in mind when you do a safety audit and are identifying focal hazard spots:

- Around machines
- Inside doorways
- Ramps & steps
- Wash down areas



Watco Safety Grip® works because the epoxy resin coating holds the aggregate so effectively. This is because it is based on Araldite, a two-part epoxy resin glue. It's not like sprinkling grit into a paint, which will gradually wear out as the floor is used. If you ask us for a small tile sample of Safety Grip® see if you can get the grit out of the coating!





OUTSIDE AREAS

Outside areas get wet, so they get slippery, both for vehicles and pedestrians. Poorly drained areas which puddle are particularly hazardous. Given a wet day, people rush from the car park to the building and this is when accidents can happen.



PAINTING

Watco Heavy Duty Anti-Slip Traffic Paint provides a safe, anti slip surface for pedestrians and vehicles. Just one thick coat of this two-pack epoxy resin provides a heavy-duty finish with excellent slip resistance. It's available in a range of colours so is great for colour marking parking bays, disabled parking, safe walkways, etc. It's solvent based so we prefer it is used outside rather than inside. The benefit of a solvent base is that it will dry quicker than water-based products, especially if the weather is not so warm. Preparation is relatively limited before using a solvent based epoxy resin, and it's just one quick roller applied coat.

REPAIRS

If there are trip hazards or holes that need repairing see Watco Concrex® for concrete and Watco Concrex® Asphalt Repair for asphalt/Tarmac surfaces. Essential repairs to make outside areas safe don't have to stop in the winter since Watco Concrex® Sub Zero can be used at any cold UK temperature.



ROOF ACCESS AREAS

Often roofs must be accessed for maintenance. Either maintenance of the roof itself, or on the flat roof of many commercial buildings there is access to roof-based maintenance units such as air conditioning. Safety on a roof is of paramount importance.

MATTING

Watco Roof Walkway Matting is used extensively on flat roofs where regular access is required.

It is heavy, so can be just laid in place without any mechanical fixing (which may damage the roof membrane) and has been tested for stability in winds of up to 100mph. It is extremely durable, UV resistant, non-slip and free draining, so won't get full of rainwater. Available in a range of sizes.

PAINTING

Watco Roofsafe is a one coat, thick, roller applied coloured coating. It both seals and waterproofs old, flat roofs and dries to leave a textured slip resistant surface. The coloured coating effectively marks a safe walkway across a roof to a maintenance access point. Watco Roofsafe can be applied to felt or asphalt roofs and is a simple DIY application.

STEPS & RAMPS TRIP HAZARDS

It is important that an even surface is maintained on step treads and that damaged step nosings are repaired to prevent people catching their shoes and risking a fall.

Watco Concrex® epoxy resin mortar is ideal for this repair for a number of reasons. It is so strong and 'resin rich' that it can be 'feathered' to nothing at the edge of the repair. This makes it a perfect solution for levelling worn and dished concrete step treads. It is so strong that the Watco Concrex® repair in the middle of the tread (which takes all the wear) will not dust or wear away. The fact that Watco Concrex® can be shaped and moulded means that chips or general damage to the step nosing can be permanently repaired. Ramps can be particularly hazardous depending on how steep they are. Again, Watco Concrex® makes essential safety repairs quick and easy.

If steps are both damaged and slippery Watco Firm-Step® GRP Step Covers will cover up a worn and damaged surface and make it anti slip. Or, if the nosing only is damaged Watco Firm-Step® GRP Edge will just cover the damaged nosing highlighting it with a yellow or white slip resistant nosing. The Watco Firm-Step® GRP products are so strong that damaged steps do not need to be repaired before the step or nosing covers are applied – also, they don't even need cleaning since the GRP is screwed into place.



STEPS & RAMPS SLIPPERY SURFACES

Steps and ramps can present an even greater challenge than floors when it comes to keeping people safe. Steps inside and out can be hazardous especially if they become wet or greasy. Watco has a choice of tried and tested solutions.

ANTI SLIP COATING

Watco Safety Grip® is ideal for both steps and ramps. It is a two-pack epoxy resin coating which is applied in one thick single coat. The formulation uses pigmented Araldite which holds the graded anti-slip particles in place. Safety Grip® is extremely tough and will withstand heavy traffic such as forklift trucks. It is used extensively on steps, ramps/disabled ramps, loading bays, car parks, tail lifts, foot bridges, walkways and entrance ways to busy areas.

GRP STEP COVERS

For difficult to coat areas where you just can't wait for a coating to dry before putting it back into use, or for application in wet or very cold areas where using a coating is impractical, Watco Firm-Step® Covers are ideal. They are made of non-slip GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) and are exceptionally strong making them ideal for area in constant use. They are approximately 4mm thick and will not warp or swell. They are also ideal for steps which are too weak or damaged to be prepared properly for a paint coating. For dirty or oily steps that are hard to clean, just screw-fix them into place. Watco Firm-Step® Covers are virtually indestructible and more or less maintenance free.

STEP NOSINGS

If it's just the edge of steps that need protecting rather than the whole step itself, then choose Watco Firm-Step® Edge. Watco Firm-Step® Edge is just as slip resistant and strong as the Watco Firm-Step® Covers and is chamfered at the back which reduces any potential trip hazard. We have two different versions available, one for inside and one for outside.

However, if you would prefer to use a coating then Watco Stepmarker would be ideal. It is a based on a two-part epoxy coating and is ready for foot traffic in just 4 hours. It can be applied as low as 5°C, so allowing for essential maintenance even during the colder months. Watco Stepmarker is slip resistant and clearly highlights step edges and trip hazards.

SAFETY TAPES

For smooth surfaces where the strength of GRP is not as critical we would recommend Watco Surestep® Treads or Watco Safety Tape. For profiled metal such as chequer plate use Watco Conformable Surestep® Treads or Watco Conformable Safety Tape.



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ABOUT WATCO

Watco has grown to become the UK's leading manufacturer and direct supplier of industrial strength flooring products. Thanks to our chemists and technical advisors, even first time users can achieve a professional finish that gives years of durable service. The ISO 9001 Certification, a recognised standard for quality management, is your guarantee that we have tried and tested processes in place to meet your needs.