



## **Winter Health and Safety Tips**

### **Slip and Falls** **No Laughing Matter**

#### **Preventing Interior Falls**

- Ensure you have an adequate number of floor mats located inside the entrance doors to your building for removal of excess moisture, salt and other particles that could cause a fall.
- Use of “Caution-Wet Floor” signs should be considered in areas where there are regular issues with moisture build-up.
- Ensure appropriate housekeeping and keep all walk ways clear of debris.
- Ensure adequate lighting is available in walkways, entryways and the like.
- Verify placement of handrails where needed.
- Where wet processes are used, maintain drainage and provide false floors, platforms, mats, or other dry standing places where practicable.
- Cleaning schedule should avoid busy times.
- Remove all cables and cords that cross walk areas.
- Make sure all mats are securely fastened.
- Keep floors clean and dry. In addition to being a slip hazard, continually wet surfaces promote the growth of mold, fungi, and bacteria that can cause infections.
- Ensure spills are reported and cleaned up immediately.

#### **Preventing Exterior Falls**

- During times of inclement weather, remind parishioners and other visitors to wear appropriate footwear based upon weather conditions and to be cautious when entering or leaving the buildings. This can be done either with a reminder in the bulletin or with an announcement at the conclusion of mass or the activity.
- Clearly mark areas where there is a change in elevation including steps, curbs and the like. This is particularly important where the change of elevation is not obvious.
- Adequately monitor your building and property for potentially dangerous and hazardous conditions.

#### **Proper Snow Removal**

- Be sure your snow removal operations are conducted in a reasonable manner so as to meet industry standards.
- Clearly document your snow removal operations through the use of a log. Maintain a copy of your logs for a minimum of three years.

- Ensure regular inspection of the grounds to spot slippery areas.
- Be sure that areas designated as snow storage areas are properly drained and do not create additional hazards with snowmelt and refreeze issues.
- Ensure all drains are clear of debris. This includes gutters and storm drains.
- If using a contractor for snow removal, be sure to secure a certificate of insurance.
- If performing your own snow removal, be sure to maintain the equipment and provide proper training to the employees/volunteers on the use of the equipment.
- Adequately mark any structures such as curbs, parking islands, drain covers or the like prior to the snowfall to ensure these items are not struck.
- Ensure that adequate time is allowed for snow removal operations prior to the start of church, school or other activities.
- Leave adequate supplies of ice melt and or sand at the doors for those times when staff is not available and the conditions could worsen.
- Pay special attention to areas where water drains off the roof and from gutters and crosses walking paths to the building.
- Take extra care of walkway on the north side of your building as they are consistently in the shade.
- Become familiar with your local ordinances related to snow removal. Most require that snow be removed within 24 hours of the discontinuance of snow fall.