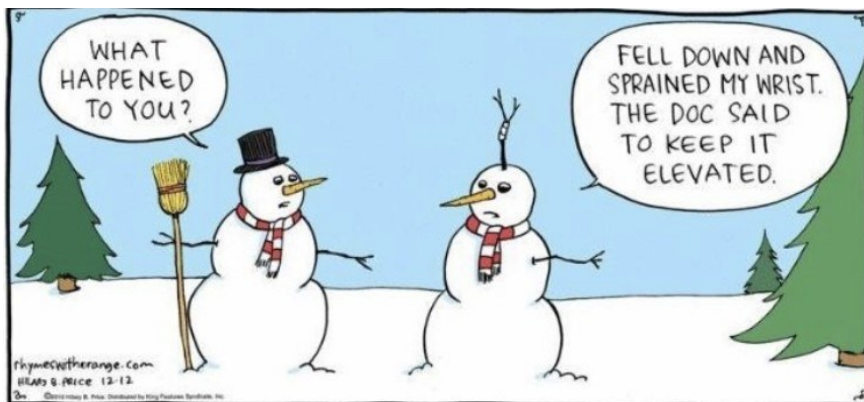


The University of Akron EOHS Safety Newsletter

November 2025

Slips, Trips, and Falls—Watch Out for Walking Surfaces Affected by Winter Weather

The seasonal shift towards colder weather brings with it the potential for slip and fall hazards due to rain, snow, and ice on walking surfaces. While most people recognize the inherent risks and consequences of falling while working at heights, most workers are unaware that falls from the same level (e.g. slipping on a patch of ice) account for hundreds of thousands of workplace injuries and about 135 fatalities each year in the U.S. When walking on icy or snow-covered ground, taking shorter steps and walking at a slower pace will provide more time to react if you lose your balance or traction. Whilst traversing stairs, be sure to always use the handrail and plant your feet firmly on each step. Be especially wary of wet pavement spots, as a layer of nearly invisible ice may be present. Once indoors, it is a good practice to remove as much snow and water from your shoes as possible, but keep in mind that carpeted areas near entryways may be slippery. Concerns about walkway conditions should be reported to PFOC, while slip, trip, and falls should be reported to your supervisor and EOHS. Taking extra care and reporting potential hazards, means Zips don't slip!



Laboratory Eyewash Flushing

A critical item relating to laboratory eyewash stations is the weekly flushing step which prevents stagnant water from collecting in the supply piping. To perform the flush, activate the eyewash station for about 1 minute and ensure that the water is clear and flowing with sufficient water pressure (at least 0.4 gallons per minute). Performing frequent flushes is also a good way to ensure familiarity with the specific eyewash model in your lab. Check for the nearest drain location before flushing each unit.



Safer Alternatives for Methylene Chloride (DCM)

Fortunately for many researchers, the EPA granted an extended timeline for compliance with the DCM final rule, issued in 2024, which requires: identification and labeling of spaces where DCM will be used, air monitoring to ensure that DCM exposure does not exceed 2 ppm as an 8-hour time-weighted average or 16 ppm as a 15-minute time-weighted average, proper controls (e.g. fume hoods) for work with DCM, and a workplace chemical protection program (WCPP) to detail how the risks of DCM will be mitigated. The deadline for DCM exposure monitoring has been extended from May 5, 2025 to November 9, 2026. Research groups planning to use DCM must contact EOHS to comply with the exposure monitoring that must be completed in the next year. Due to the onerous respiratory protection requirements for areas that may exceed the 2 ppm exposure limit, researchers are strongly encouraged to investigate [alternative solvents](#) for processes that previously relied on DCM. Additional compliance information published by the EPA [can be found at this link](#).

EPA Trichloroethylene (TCE) Rule Updates

The EPA has published a prohibition on the use of TCE for a variety of uses, including distribution in commerce and industrial/commercial uses. If you cannot eliminate TCE from your laboratory procedures, **contact EOHS immediately**. The EPA compliance deadline for WCPP implementation is December 18, 2025. [Link to EPA compliance guide](#)

Laboratory Waste Pickup Form

Are your laboratory waste containers getting full? Be sure to submit a [Waste Pickup Request](#) and have them replaced! EOHS will remove the full waste containers and replace them accordingly with empty flammable or aqueous 5-gallon drums. Contact Dr. Mike DeBord (mad151@uakron.edu) with specific waste questions.