

PF Olsen Toolbox Safety Alert 55

Date: February – March 2023	Focus Group: All Operations
Topic: Slips and Trips – Sprains and Tendon Damage	Issued by: Nic Steens

Background and Incidents: Recently we have had 4 injuries resulting from slips and trips. In one, a worker’s hand slipped while he drove in a waratah standard (lacerated fingers and tendon damage). Another person snapped an Achilles tendon while pushing an LUV, and the final two involved pruners slipping and hurting various body parts.

Injury Details: from minor to serious – one needing surgery, another a plaster cast.

Risk Awareness: Outdoor workers do many jobs where there is a risk of slips and trips. These jobs include (1) working at height, (2) working on uneven or slippery surfaces, (3) using ladders or steps, (4) getting on and off machinery, and/or (5) pushing objects e.g. small trees and vehicles while standing in/on on less than ideal surfaces.

Safe Behaviours: Avoiding slips and trips is mostly achieved by thinking first, taking care and not rushing. We can also undertake a routine of stretching before work (and after breaks), which will improve tendon flexibility and relax muscles. Additionally:

- Take time to position and secure steps and ladders correctly into a firm base
- Take care not to overreach or over-extend during body movements
- Maintain an upright stance and ensure each step is on a firm footing
- Know that wet or icy conditions make objects more slippery
- Pick your track carefully – intellectuals solve problems, geniuses prevent them!
- Use boots with good tread or added slip protection e.g., spikes.

For Site Manager:

Print and complete the following:

1. Discuss with employees/operators:
2. Place on-site notice board or in file:

Site Manager: _____ **Date:** / /
(initials)

