

Risk Alert

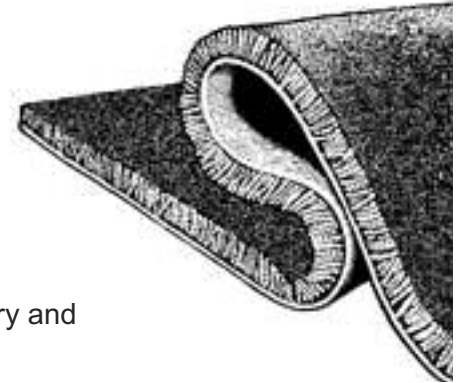


Listening. Learning. Leading.®

Enter into safety

Members, guests and employees expect a safe environment when they enter your facility. Unfortunately, entrance areas are a common area for slips and falls. Church Mutual found that almost 20 percent of slips and falls at worship centers are caused by wet or icy surfaces. A small amount of water can present a real slip problem, whether it is from snow and slush during the winter months or rain and mud in the spring, summer and fall.

Walk-off mats at all entrances are an excellent way to keep floors both dry and clean and help prevent falls on slippery surfaces.



Mats can enhance safety

When the proper mat is used, interior floors can be kept dry, which helps prevent injuries from slipping. Choose a mat design and surface material based on the expected environmental conditions and foot traffic load.

Length is an important piece of mat design. The Green Building Council recommends a minimum of 10-15 feet of mat in entranceways. This length is typically long enough for people to take four to six strides on the mat before stepping off. Geographic areas with snowfall require larger mats.

A vital part of the effectiveness of the entrance mat is keeping the mat in good working condition. Ensure mats remain flat. Anti-slip adhesive tape or grip strips are available to help prevent sponge-backed mats from curling or moving on polished floors. Check for signs of wear. Thinning areas and curling around the corners mean it is time for a new mat.

Maximizing the effectiveness of your mat

An entrance mat should dissipate water without splashing it back onto the floor. This means cleaning and rotating mats regularly. In high-traffic times, be prepared to change the mat when saturated.

Mats should be used at all public entrances and employee access points. Some other common areas where entrance mats can be found to maintain a clean and safe environment are in lobbies, reception areas and high-traffic areas.

(Over)

Additional entrance area safety action items

Display signs warning for changes in elevation and use anti-slip tape on stair treads. Position door catches and doorstops so doors do not close into traffic.

Display signs warning of the risk of slipping when appropriate, such as placing a caution cone in periods of heavy rain or snow or when mopping. Always start mopping with a clean mop. Keep the mop on the floor to avoid splashing the walls, baseboards and mats. Change the mop bucket solution when it becomes soiled.

For a complete collection of the *Risk Alert* series, visit our Web site and look in the Safety Resources section.