



We've all been walking or performing a task when some event takes place, or an invisible brick shows up and causes us to lose our balance and come crashing to the ground. During any fall incident there is a point where we feel we can regain control only to realize it's too late and the ground is coming up faster than we thought. No ethical person leaves home for work saying, "I think I'll fall today." Nonetheless, people do fall. Immediately after a fall people react in different ways. Some stay down, analyzing their situation and performing a diagnostic on themselves to sense injuries. Others jump up hoping no one saw them. As we look at the anatomy of a fall, what comes to light is the fact that some unforeseen condition or act has entered our path and has not been recognized in time for us to take the

appropriate action to avoid it. The problem is that we have failed to see the warning signs and blindly entered into a situation where everything was stacked against us. But how often does this happen? Is this much ado about nothing? Look at the situation this way, by the end of FY08 CRDAMC staff had reported 28 falls, not to mention the injuries related to those falls. By the end of FY11 that number had grown to 44. From the beginning of FY12 until the 1st of May, staff has reported 30 falls. The bottom line is that whatever we are doing to reduce these numbers is not working. So what exactly are we doing? Well, for starters supervisors and the Safety Office investigate reported incidents to determine root causes and develop actionable measures to prevent similar situations. The findings are reported to leadership at regular meetings, Safety Coordinator training and awareness at new employee orientation. What else can we do? We've got to start taking care of each other. If you see a slip, trip or fall hazard, warn your co-workers and others. Take care of it if you can. If not, mark the hazard so others will see it. Take the time needed to call those who can fix it. Attend training and use what you learn. Talk to each other about the hazards you encounter. Sharing your knowledge may keep a friend from falling. Wear proper foot wear. Make sure it's appropriate to the conditions. Lose the complacency because like it or not, we are not in total control. We must learn to look for the hazards instinctively. We must take it personally when we find something in our area that can hurt someone else. Let's work together to use what we have to curb this trend. Let's make a difference by developing a culture that will stop the pain of falling where it starts, right in front of you.

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