

Prevention Connection



Safety resources to protect your world

Stuck in the mud?

Don't let your business get bogged down by soggy conditions

Muddy conditions can spring up any time of year, but they're especially prevalent (and costly) in the spring. The risks to businesses are trifold, including loss of production, equipment issues, and potential for employee injuries.

Delays in work

- **Let Mother Nature win this round** – Sometimes, it's just too muddy to work. Depending on your project, soil type, and degree of saturation, you may need to focus on other tasks for a period of time like maintenance or safety training.
- **Environmental concerns** – Check erosion control systems around your worksite at least every two weeks and after every rain. Runoff and damage to adjacent properties can be costly consequences for business owners.
- **Watch the weather** – If rain or thawing conditions are in the forecast, plan your work accordingly. Prioritize tasks that will become difficult during muddy conditions, and communicate potential risks with the teams impacted.

Equipment issues

- **Don't get stuck** – Sounds simple, but moving heavy equipment in wet conditions is tricky. Be extremely cautious against slipping, tipping, and lack of traction. This can seriously damage large equipment, not to mention the cost and time associated with recovering mired machinery.
- **Organize your site for effective mud management** – Gravel, silt fences, wattle, filter socks, and erosion control blankets can help you organize and manage your site by encouraging water flow away from work areas.





- **Don't underestimate the weight** – It may sound silly, but how much more do your materials weigh when wet? If you're hauling or lifting supplies, make sure you are taking into account the additional water weight when operating equipment and traveling on roads.

Employee injuries

- **Slips and falls** – Slips and falls are always a concern, and mud can be just as slippery as ice or wet surfaces. Use three points of contact when entering or exiting vehicles and equipment. Feet stuck in mud can lead to falling at awkward angles.

- **Sprains and strains** – Sprains and strains can be more painful than broken bones. When pulling a foot out of mud, don't yank. Work it back and forth with gentle force to remove it.
- **Proper footwear** – Encourage proper footwear including mud boots with substantial treads. Provide ways for employees to clean mud off their boots before climbing on equipment, and encourage good foot hygiene in wet conditions.

Bonus Tip:

If you have Workers' Compensation coverage from SECURA, you can speak with a nurse 24/7 for advice on how to evaluate and treat minor injuries like sprains and strains at no cost. Call Nurse Hotline: 888-333-3334

Related Prevention Connection topics

[Spring cleaning safety](#)

[Business interruption and contingency plan](#)

[Heavy equipment daily inspection checklist](#)

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Spring cleaning safety in the workplace

Spring is not just a great time to clear your office of dust bunnies and vacuum around your desk; it is also a good time to eliminate safety hazards in your workplace or shop area. Check these areas while spring cleaning.

- 1. Inspect the building and outlying buildings:** Take a good look at the exterior of your buildings. Yes, maintenance should be looking, too, but an extra pair of safety eyes is always a plus. Are there signs of damage, leaks, or deteriorated wood? Are signs faded? Don't wait until next winter to correct these issues.
- 2. Inspect the grounds:** Have footings washed away or hazards been uncovered now that the seasons have changed? Has cement spilled or potholes formed in the parking lot or roadway?
- 3. Electrical outlets and cords:** Check electrical outlets and cords throughout your workplace. Frayed wires or loose fitting plugs are potential fire hazards. Look at outlets, fuse boxes, and extension cords to make sure they are not overloaded.
- 4. Fire extinguishers:** Check your fire extinguisher at least once yearly, including the hose, nozzle, and other parts, to make sure it is in good condition. The pressure gauge should be in the "green" range. If necessary, move your fire extinguisher to an accessible place.
- 5. Flammable materials:** Keep all flammable materials and liquids several feet away from gas furnaces and water heaters. When possible, store all flammable liquids in a UL-approved flammable liquid storage cabinet.
- 6. Furnace:** Clean or replace your furnace filter.
- 7. Smoke/Carbon monoxide detectors:** Inspect each smoke/carbon monoxide detector to ensure it is in working order, and test all detectors monthly. Ideally, have at least one smoke detector on each floor of your workplace. Install additional smoke detectors as needed. Plan the better change of your detectors around a calendar event like daylight savings time.

This bulletin is designed by SECURA Insurance to inform you of important safety measures that can save you considerable business expense.

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Business Interruption and Contingency Planning Worksheet

Business Interruption

- Are the plants/companies stand-alone or do they rely on each other for WIP or share work? (loss at one plant would affect another plant)
- If there was an incident at one of the plants, could the other plants help make up any loss in production?
- What are the normal operating hours? Is there any time at the plant to make up production? (off shifts or weekends)
- Do you have qualified subcontractors on a retainer (or other formal relationship)?
- Do you currently use subcontractors to perform manufacturing or another aspect of the operations on a regular basis?

Suppliers

- What are the major raw materials?
- How many suppliers do you have for each?
- Do you do any type of audit of your suppliers?
- Have you ever had an interruption to production due to a supplier?
- How many days of supplies/ raw materials do you keep on hand?

Customers

- What is the size of your customer base?
- Do you have one or two key customers that would cripple the operation if they were lost?
- What is the length of a typical contract?

Transportation

- How are raw materials received (truck, train, etc.)?
- Are there alternate means available?
- How is the finished product shipped (truck, train, etc.)?
- Are there alternate means available?

Key Production Equipment

- What is the key production equipment at each facility?
- Are there critical spares on site for key equipment?

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Heavy Equipment Daily Inspection Checklist

Heavy equipment should be inspected daily to prevent costly maintenance or accidents. Use this checklist to verify that your equipment is evaluated daily. As you warm up your equipment to proper running temperature, inspect these important factors.

Tip: You also can use this checklist to prep equipment for long-term storage, if needed.

Inspection Date: ____/____/____ Time: ____ a.m./p.m.
 Location: _____
 Equipment Type: _____ Unit #: _____
 Inspector's Name: _____ Inspector's Signature: _____

Inspection	Good	Need Repair	N/A
Cab mirrors, seat belt, and glass			
Horn and gauges			
Light			
Turn signals			
Backup lights and alarm			
Fire extinguisher condition			
Windshield wipers and fluid			
Fluid levels			
Battery (charge, connection, etc.)			
Engine oil			
Transmission fluid			
Brake fluid			
Cooling system fluid			
Oil leak/tube			
Brake condition (dynamic, service, park, etc.)			
Tires or tracks condition, damage, etc.			
Hydraulic oil			
Hydro condition			
Coupling device and connectors			
Control system			
Brake/steering condition			

Notes: _____