Maintaining Clean, Dry Floors – School Safety Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Health Risks from Unclean Floors:** Dirty floors are breeding grounds for bacteria, dust, and mold, which can contribute to respiratory issues, allergies, and asthma amongst students and staff.
2. **Increased Risk of Slips and Falls from Wet Floors:** Wet floors, whether from spilled liquids, wet shoes, or mopping, are a significant risk for slip-and-fall accidents. Even small amounts of water or moisture can make hard floors extremely slippery.
3. **Inconsistent Cleaning Practices:** Inconsistent or infrequent floor cleaning can create hidden hazards. Areas that are overlooked or cleaned irregularly, such as corners or beneath furniture, can accumulate debris, increasing the likelihood of trips or falls.
4. **Improper Footwear and Floor Surface Compatibility:** Staff and students wearing inappropriate footwear for the environment can significantly increase the risk of falls on both wet and dry floors.
5. **Obstructions and Clutter:** Clutter on school floors, including backpacks, books, cords, or other items, presents a serious tripping hazard. Combining clutter with dirty or wet floors increases the chance of an accident, particularly in high-traffic areas like hallways, stairways, or gymnasiums.

STATS

- Between January 2017 and December 2021, approximately 2.4 million individuals were treated in emergency departments for injuries occurring in U.S. schools. While this includes all types of injuries, it underscores the significant number

of incidents that can be mitigated through proper maintenance and safety protocols.

- In the 2020–2021 period, there were 162,222 unintentional slip-and-fall injuries reported in Canada, accounting for nearly 60% of all injury hospitalizations and emergency room visits. While this data encompasses all environments, it highlights the prevalence of slip-and-fall incidents, which can be reduced in schools through proper floor maintenance.
- Over a six-year period, slips, trips, and falls caused approximately 67,700 injuries among school employees, making it a leading cause of staff injuries requiring emergency care.
- Floors and flooring materials contribute directly to more than 2 million fall injuries each year in the United States, highlighting the importance of proper floor maintenance.
- During winter months, the presence of snow and ice increases the risk of wet floors in schools, necessitating enhanced cleaning protocols to prevent slips and falls. Data from the Vancouver School Board indicates that slips and falls are significant concerns within educational settings.