



[Log in](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Free trial](#) | [eNewsletter Sign Up](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Reviews](#) | [Events](#) | [Contact us](#)

Search 6,075 articles

SEARCH

[Construction](#) | [Manufacturing/engineering](#) | [Chemicals](#) | [Retail and distribution](#) | [Catering and leisure](#) | [Transport](#) | [Utilities](#) | [Public services](#) | [Financial/general services](#)

[Health](#)

[Safety](#)

[Professional Skills](#)

## Ask the expert: Winter gritting

Alcumus 22 January 2016

Road safety, Slips, trips, and falls

**Question:**  
With cold winter weather upon us suddenly, we are reviewing our policy for gritting our car parks and outdoor walkways for snow and ice. What should we be considering?

**Answer:**  
The approved code of practice for the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 says: "Arrangements should be made to minimise risks from snow and ice which may involve gritting, snow clearing and closure of some routes, particularly outside stairs, ladders and walkways on roofs."

Case law has established that a system of controlling the hazards of snow and ice discharges liability if it fulfils best practice; it is not expected to extend to unreasonable lengths. Devoting resources to clearing the most used areas is considered reasonable.

You may wish to outsource clearance to a contractor with snow ploughs and grit spreaders, particularly if heavy snowfall is anticipated. Then you have to control and vet the contractor's safety arrangements. If you tackle the job in-house, named individuals should be responsible for clearing a suitable path through the snow and ice and for treating it. They should be adequately briefed, suitably equipped and wearing warm weather PPE, including footwear with good tread. Consider providing ice spikes or cleats for the footwear.

Anticipation is key. Ensure you keep supplies of rock salt and clearance equipment. Identify priority areas, including zones where cars and pedestrians mix, well-used paths, and don't forget fire escape exit routes. Give slopes, steps and changes of level extra attention. It's unlikely that you'll be sued or held responsible if someone is injured on a path or pavement if you've cleared it carefully.

If your planned clearance is beaten back by heavy snowfall, then you may need to divert pedestrians to a few cleared routes with the help of signs or barriers.

Rock salt doesn't work instantly; it needs time to be ground down, which is when it becomes most efficient. Gritting twice a day early in the morning and in the early evening is likely to be most practicable, but circumstances may vary. The best time to put down rock salt is in the evening before temperatures nose dive and the ice forms. If it has snowed, put salt over the first layer of snow. Compacted snow, which turns to ice, is difficult to treat with grit. Avoid contaminating plants and trees during spreading.

You should also consider if there is any potential for the melting snow and ice to be walked into the building, thereby creating yet another slip hazard. Fitting canopies over building entrances can help reduce the amount of melt water migrating into the building. Take steps to control slips immediately inside the building by mopping and, better still, by using matting or non-slip flooring.

*Keith Rhodes, senior consultant, Alcumus – a leading health, safety and environmental consultancy whose specialists develop tailored and workable solutions.*

Road safety, Slips, trips, and falls

- Related Items:**  
[Ask the expert: drink driving bans](#)  
[Ask the expert: Emergency evacuation for disabled staff](#)  
[Ask the expert: Reclaiming training costs](#)

**Issue:** February 2016



[Read the latest issue](#)



**NEW BLOG POST**  
Tim Marsh  
on managing autistic workers



[CDM 2015 explained](#)

[NEBOSH articles](#)

[ACoP updates](#)

[Case studies](#)

[eNewsletter](#)

[Subscribe now](#)

Your colleagues are amazing. Let's keep them that way.

**The Health & Safety Event**  
 NEC, Birmingham  
 22nd - 24th March  
 Register FREE



[Printer-friendly version](#)

### Post a comment

Your name

Subject

Comment \*

↑  
↓

- No HTML tags allowed.
- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

[More information about text formats ?](#)

#### CAPTCHA

This question is for testing whether you are a human visitor and to prevent automated spam submissions.

Math question \*

16 + 3 =

Solve this simple math problem and enter the result. E.g. for 1+3, enter 4.

### SUBSCRIBE

- Unlimited access to more than 5000 articles
- Breaking news updated throughout the day
- Receive the magazine every month directly to your door



### FREE TRIAL

- One month's access to all online content
- Daily news reports
- Free weekly eNewsletter
- A complimentary issue of Health and Safety at Work magazine



[View all issues](#)

#### Health

Asbestos  
Asthma  
Chemicals (and COSHH)  
Disability  
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)  
Drugs and alcohol  
Ergonomics (MSDs)  
Legionnaires' disease  
Mental health  
New and expectant mothers  
Noise  
Older workers  
Risk assessment  
Sickness absence

#### Stress/bullying

Vibration  
**Safety**  
Accident reduction  
Accident reporting / RIDDOR  
Asbestos  
Chemicals  
Confined spaces  
Corporate manslaughter  
Directors' duties  
Drugs and alcohol  
Electrical safety  
Emergency planning  
Fire  
First aid

#### HSE

Lifting operations  
Lone workers  
Manual handling  
Migrant workers  
New and expectant mothers  
Noise  
Personal injury  
Personal protective equipment (PPE)  
Regulation  
Risk assessment  
Road safety  
Safe systems of work  
Slips, trips, and falls  
Training

#### Violence at work

Work at height  
Work equipment  
Worker involvement / representation  
Workplace transport  
Young workers  
**Professional Skills**  
Legal brief  
Qualifications  
Training  
Management skills  
Webinars  
Ask the recruiter  
Ask the expert  
Career path

[About us](#)  
[Contact us](#)  
[Advertise with us](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#)  
[Terms and Conditions](#)

© Lexis Nexis. All Rights Reserved.

**Contact details:**

Quadrant House, Brighton Road, Surrey SM2 5AS | Customer Services 0845 370 1234

**Partner sites:**

[The Environmentalist](#), [Environment Jobs](#), [IIRSM](#), [LexisNexis](#), [Taxation Jobs](#), [Taxation](#), [Tax Adviser](#), [Tax Journal](#), [PensionsWorld](#), [Pay & Benefits](#), [Criminal Law & Justice](#), [New Law Journal](#), [Law webinars](#)