Keeping Janitors Safe

Janitors have higher rates of injuries and compensable claim* costs compared to other service workers.

Control your claim costs by reducing common workplace hazards.

**Slips, trips and falls:**

- **Limit cleaning floors** with liquids to the last jobs of the shift, or other method to ensure janitors don’t have to walk over wet surfaces.
- **Allow janitors** to have at least one hand free, and ensure they can see where they are stepping when carrying objects up and down stairs.
- **Minimize carrying objects** up and down stairs by providing equipment on each floor, and elevator access when large garbage or other material must be moved between floors.
- **Provide** required ladder safety training (**WAC 296-876-150**):
  - **Train** employees to recognize ladder hazards including: safe ladder construction, use, placement, and maximum load capacity.
  - **Retrain** employees periodically

**Repetitive arm movements:**

- Invest in machines, where possible, that will reduce the need for repetitive arm movements (e.g., floor sweepers).

**Heavy lifting:**

- Use the online lifting calculator to determine safe lifting weights. [www.orosha.org/interactive/lifting/lift_safety.html](http://www.orosha.org/interactive/lifting/lift_safety.html)
- Use smaller containers to transport garbage
- Use a ramp or other means to allow janitors to safely toss garbage from chest height or below.

Janitors often have **limited English** language speaking and reading fluency.

Ensure safety training and all instructions are provided to them in their primary language.

- Use signs with pictures and universal caution graphics.
- Utilize safety training and posters available from L&I in languages other than English.
- Review documents from the state of California, developed specifically for janitors and custodial workers: [www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/SprainsStrains/guidelines/default.asp](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/Safety/SprainsStrains/guidelines/default.asp) (Scroll down to Janitorial Services)

*Compensable claims are those that result in more than 3 lost workdays, or where the worker was kept on salary, or had total permanent disability.