

# Cleaners' Safety Newsletter



Winter 2025

## Announcements: Mop Study

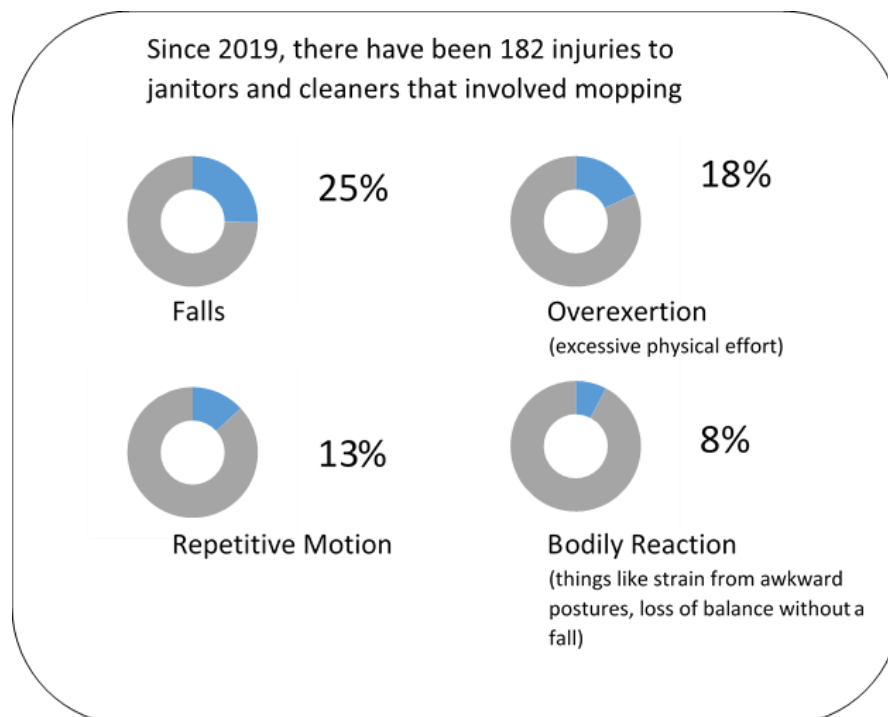
Since we started our work with janitors and cleaners, our researchers have been learning about how using different kinds of cleaning equipment affects the body. Currently, we are preparing a lab study to test different kinds of mop handles.

This study will take place in Tumwater, WA at the SHARP research lab. At the lab, we will set up mopping tasks for our tests that are similar to what janitors and cleaners may do on the job— such as having participants mop around obstacles or underneath office furniture. We will be testing the equipment with people from different backgrounds (both experienced cleaning professionals and others).

Look for our next newsletter to learn how you may be able to participate! For more information about this study, please contact: [Christina.Garbuz@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:Christina.Garbuz@Lni.wa.gov)

## Hazard Spotlight: Mopping Safety

Since July 1, 2019, there have been 182 claims filed by cleaners that involve mops and mopping tasks. Cleaners often fell while walking across wet floors. Forty percent (40%) of these were claims that involved wage replacement or disability (usually more severe injuries or illnesses). The chart below shows the most common injury types<sup>1</sup>:



One third (30%) of mopping claims were classified as work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

**Prevention ideas:**

- Plan your mopping paths to allow access to mopping supplies (and an exit) without having to walk on wet surfaces. Wear shoes that have good traction.
- Try to keep an upright back posture as much possible. Avoid spending too much time with your back bent forward (leaning forward over the mop). Keep your mop close to your body.
- Use chemicals safely – know what chemicals are being used, and the physical effects they may cause. Wear gloves and protective eyewear if mixing solution or when filling and dumping mop buckets, because these can splash into your eyes or onto your skin. If possible, ensure there are open windows or adequate ventilation.
- If you can, rotate between tasks and take breaks.

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<sup>1</sup> Claim coding of injury characteristics for workers' compensation injuries differs between State Fund (SF) and Self-Insured (SI) claims, this analysis used both systems and grouped similar codes. Nineteen percent (19%) of these claims did not have enough information to classify.