

Feeling Safe Contributes to Positive Experiences for Volunteers

The staff of Salt Lake County Aging Services' Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) wants all volunteers to have a positive experience while serving. Feeling safe at the volunteer site is an important element of a good volunteer experience. Always be sure you get safety training for your volunteer assignment. Additionally, there's much you can do personally to help prevent falls or other injuries.

Some of the things to look for that help to provide a safe work environment are:

- ❖ Restrooms with grab bars in at least one stall
- ❖ Handrails on stairways; at least on one side (always use these)
- ❖ Non-slip steps, indoors and out
 - Rubberized tread strips on concrete, wood or tile steps—color contrast strips on the top and bottom steps, particularly outdoors
 - Or special paint with grit
 - Or low-pile or looped carpet
 - Stair runners tacked down
- ❖ Adequate lighting, indoors and out
- ❖ Non-slip, evened-out walking surfaces, indoors and out, year-round
- ❖ Uncluttered halls and walkways
- ❖ Spills mopped up immediately, marked with “caution” signs



If volunteer duties are conducted in a residence, report anything you think is unsafe to your supervisor or person responsible for the residence. This simple action may protect vulnerable senior clients, young children and you.

What you can do personally to help prevent injury: Wear non-slip, low-heeled footwear ~ Use corrective eyewear and get annual eye exams ~ take your time and pay attention to surroundings ~ keep a small zippered bag of ice melt handy during winter ~ **do whatever you can to keep your work area safe and always report unsafe conditions to someone in charge.**

It's important to note that this isn't a complete list. For more information visit website: <http://www.slvhealth.org/programs/injuryPrevention/seniorFallPrevention/index.html>

Our thanks to Carol Avery—Salt Lake Valley Health Department/Health Educator/Injury Prevention Program for providing this article. Carol also serves as an RSVP volunteer with Aging Services.

RSVP is a program of Salt Lake County Aging Services 801/468-2490



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