

# Stairs

Stairs pose a huge hazard when it comes to slips and falls. West Bend suggests using this criteria if you have stairs at your location(s):



- 1) Handrails that:
  - a) Are installed on both sides of the steps;
  - b) Are elevated 30 to 37 inches above the surface of the tread;
  - c) Begin before the first descent or ascent step begins;
  - d) Are continuous onto landing areas;
  - e) Are approximately round in cross sectional shape;
  - f) Are approximately 2 inches in diameter without any sharp edges; and
  - e) Are firmly attached to the wall.
- 2) Risers should be uniform in height, ideally between 7 to 7 ¾ inches.
- 3) Treads should have a front-to-back depth of 10 to 11 inches.
- 4) Tread surfaces should have a static, nonslip coefficient of friction of at least .50.
- 5) The front edges of the treads should be distinct and potentially highlighted by lighting, a different carpet design, or other factors to announce this elevation change.
- 6) Staircases should be well lit.
- 7) Landings should have an effective depth at least equal to the width of the stair system.
- 8) The rise angle (slope) of the stair system should not exceed 35 degrees.
- 9) A handrail is needed with a 30-inch or higher rise in elevation of the steps. Handrails are needed on both sides of the staircase if the change in elevation is 44 inches or more. Handrails should always be present on an open, non-wall side of the staircase. If the width of the stair system is 88 inches or more, a handrail is needed in the middle of the staircase.
- 10) If a midrail is installed, it must be midway between the top edge of the stair rail system and the stairway step.

## Resources:

<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osa3124.pdf>