

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
GEORGIA, VALDOSTA DIVISION

Robin Eason v. Publix Super Markets, Inc., et al.

Eason v. Publix · No. 7:24-CV-2 (WLS) · Decided January 14, 2026

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia granted Publix Super Markets, Inc.'s motion for summary judgment in Robin Eason's Georgia slip-and-fall action. The court held that Eason failed to identify the substance that allegedly caused her fall and failed to create a genuine dispute regarding Publix's reasonable inspection procedures. The Clerk was directed to enter judgment for Publix.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, Valdosta Division
WRITING FOR THE COURT	W. Louis Sands, Sr. Judge
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia, Valdosta Division
DECIDED	January 14, 2026
DOCKET	7:24-CV-2 (WLS)
DISPOSITION	other
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Publix moved for summary judgment in a removed Georgia premises-liability slip-and-fall action. The district court granted the motion and directed the Clerk to enter judgment for Publix.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Summary judgment is proper when there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. The court views the evidence and reasonable factual inferences in the light most favorable to the nonmoving party, but the nonmoving party must identify specific evidence creating a genuine issue for trial.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished or nonprecedential federal district court order; precedential status is identified as unknown in the provided metadata.
PARTIES	Robin Eason v. Publix Super Markets, Inc., et al.

TOPICS

premises liability

summary judgment

negligence

duty of care

civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

premises liability

negligence

civil procedure

summary judgment

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Eason presented sufficient evidence identifying a hazardous substance or condition that caused her fall to create a genuine issue of material fact on causation.
2. Whether Publix established, without a genuine factual dispute, that it exercised reasonable care through inspection procedures and lacked actual or constructive knowledge of the alleged hazard.

HOLDINGS

1. Eason's allegation that she slipped on something slick or slippery, without evidence identifying what foreign substance caused the fall, was insufficient to create a genuine issue of material fact on causation. Because she could not identify the hazard or establish its cause, her negligence claim could not proceed.
2. Publix was entitled to summary judgment because record evidence showed that its reasonable inspection procedures were in place and followed immediately before and during the incident, while Eason offered no additional facts creating a genuine dispute concerning adherence to those procedures or Publix's constructive knowledge.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The court shall grant summary judgment if the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.” (Section II)

“Merely alleging that something was slick or slippery is insufficient.” (Section IV.A)

“Publix must present “[e]vidence establishing an adherence to customary inspection and cleaning procedures on the day in question,” not just “proof of the mere existence of such customary procedures.”” (Section IV.B)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

On June 3, 2018, Eason was shopping at a Publix in Thomasville, Georgia, wearing two-inch-high wedge sandals. While walking through a dairy aisle to retrieve an item, she alleged that her foot slid on something slick or slippery, causing her to fall and injure her hand, shoulder, and knee. She did not see the substance before or after the fall, did not identify its color or consistency beyond being slick, and did not observe any substance on her person or clothing. Publix presented evidence that an employee had inspected the aisle while stocking merchandise during the thirty minutes before the fall and found no foreign substance, and that the store maintained regular inspection and cleaning procedures.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Eason filed the action in the State Court of Thomas County, Georgia, on December 5, 2023, alleging negligent premises maintenance, failure to warn, negligent hiring, and negligent supervision. Publix removed the case to

the United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia on January 8, 2024, and answered that day. After reviewing the summary-judgment record, the district court granted Publix's motion.

DISPOSITION

other

CASES CITED

- Celotex Corp. v. Catrett, 477 U.S. 317, 322-24 (1986)
- Grimes v. Miami Dade Cnty., 552 F. App'x 902, 904 (11th Cir. 2014)
- Chapman v. AI Transp., 229 F.3d 1012, 1023 (11th Cir. 2000)
- Allen v. Tyson Foods, Inc., 121 F.3d 642, 646 (11th Cir. 1997)
- Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc., 477 U.S. 242, 248 (1986)
- Tipton v. Bergrohr GMBH-Siegen, 965 F.2d 994, 998 (11th Cir. 1992)
- Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp., 475 U.S. 574, 586-88 (1986)
- Drew v. Istar Fin., Inc., 291 Ga. App. 323, 325 (2008)
- Glynn-Brunswick Mem'l Hosp. Auth. v. Benton, 303 Ga. App. 305, 307 (2010)
- Moore v. Teague, 564 S.E.2d 817, 820 (Ga. Ct. App. 2002)
- Hobday v. Galardi, 598 S.E.2d 350, 352 (Ga. Ct. App. 2004)
- Christopher v. Donna's Country Store, 236 Ga. App. 219, 511 S.E.2d 579 (1999)
- Wilkes v. Kroger Co., 221 Ga. App. 113, 114 (1996)
- Mansell v. Starr Enters./Texaco, Inc., 256 Ga. App. 257, 258 (2002)
- Robinson v. Kroger Co., 493 S.E.2d 403, 414 (Ga. 1997)
- J.H. Harvey Co. v. Reddick, 522 S.E.2d 749, 752 (Ga. Ct. App. 1999)
- Taylor v. AmericasMart Real Estate, LLC, 651 S.E.2d 754, 759 (Ga. Ct. App. 2007)
- K-Mart Corp. v. Jackson, 521 S.E.2d 93, 96 (Ga. Ct. App. 1999)
- Straughter v. J.H. Harvey Co., Inc., 500 S.E.2d 353, 355 (Ga. Ct. App. 1998) (en banc)
- Ingles Mkts., Inc. v. Martin, 513 S.E.2d 536, 537-38 (Ga. Ct. App. 1999)
- Johnson v. All Am. Quality Foods, Inc., 340 Ga. App. 664-67, 798 S.E.2d 276, 277 (2017)
- Food Lion, Inc. v. Walker, 290 Ga. App. 574, 575, 660 S.E.2d 428 (2008)