Kitchen Safety Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

SAFETY IN THE COMMERCIAL KITCHEN ENVIRONMENT

Restaurants or food service establishments are fast-paced environments where potential hazards are only a stray plate or forgotten stove away. Staff in commercial kitchens use hazardous equipment like commercial ranges, grills, or deep fryers that can cause severe burns.

What’s the Danger

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION – 1ST STEP FOR KITCHEN SAFETY

Conduct weekly checks or daily checks to prevent hazards.

HAZARDS AND SOLUTIONS OF KITCHEN SAFETY

- Stored materials should not obstruct pathways and exits. If liquids are spilled on the floor, they should be mopped up immediately and a wet floor warning sign posted.
- Kitchen heat sources such as ovens, grills, range tops, deep fat fryers, and microwaves pose burn hazards. Using caution near hot surfaces, pots and pans, and utensils can prevent burns.
- Heat sources include boiling water, steam baths, sinks, and dishwashers. Reaching over boiling pots and hot water sources can lead to severe burns from steam.
- Oils and grease should be cooled before transporting them. Grease traps and grill surfaces should be cleaned frequently, and flammable items should not be kept near flames or heat sources.
- Comfortable, supportive shoes are essential for kitchen workers due to long periods of standing. Moving and stretching frequently and rotating tasks can help workers avoid static postures and fatigue. Proper lifting techniques

when moving heavy pots and food items can prevent strains.
- Wearing close-fitting sleeves prevents catching them on pot handles, oven and stove knobs, or dangling them in flames or hot oil. Shoes should have cushioned insteps and slip-resistant soles. Aprons provide an added layer of protection from splashes of hot water or grease. Hand mitts and pot holders should be used when handling hot items and hand protection such as mesh gloves may be worn when cutting and using sharp knives.
- It is important to know and practice emergency procedures, first ad, and how to use a fire extinguisher.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

A CLEAN KITCHEN IS A SAFE KITCHEN – CLEAN AT LEAST THIS OFTEN

- Surfaces & Utensils: After each use
- Ovens: Weekly
- Sinks: Between uses and throughout the day if used frequently
- Fridges and freezers: Monthly
- Bins: Weekly
- Ventilation Systems: Every three months to a year, depending on use.

What Staff Can Do – Wash Hands

Common sense hygiene practises can make all the difference when working with food, and washing your hands is one of the simplest ways to stop the spread of bacteria. Ensure staff wash their hands:

- Before, during and after preparing food.
- After touching raw food.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.
- After touching rubbish

Workers should wash their hands in the following way:

1. Wet your hands.

2. Apply soap to cover the whole hand.
3. Rub hands palm to palm.
4. Rub the back of your left hand with your right palm while interlacing your fingers. Repeat with the other hand.
5. Scrub your palms together with fingers interlaced.
6. Rub the backs of your fingers against your palms with fingers interlocked.
7. Clasp your left thumb with your right hand and rub in rotation. Repeat with your right thumb.
8. Rub the tips of your fingers in the opposite palm in a circular motion. Repeat for the other hand.
9. Rinse hands

Wear Hairnets or Hats

Hair nets, beard nets and hats prevent rogue hairs from ruining otherwise perfect meals.

BEST KITCHEN SAFETY PRACTICES

1) Require proper attire. You may not require kitchen uniforms, but neither should you allow baggy pants! Clothes should fit neatly and cover as much skin as is comfortable. Closed-toe shoes with non-slip soles are a must.

2) Proper communication training for workers. Unintended collisions can happen in busy kitchens unless your employees communicate effectively with each other. A simple ‘behind’ is often enough to prevent a collision.

3) Provide non-slip mats. Workers are frequently moving quickly and can easily slip on a wet or greasy floor. They need safer footing with slip-resistant mats in all hard-working areas.

4) Install equipment guards. Equipment guards prevent a lingering injury caused by lack of attention.

5) Provide adequate ventilation. A kitchen can quickly become too hot and smoky for comfort and safety. A worker overcome by heat doing a faceplant on the flat top.

6) Listen to your employees' concerns. They're most likely the first to notice potential dangers. If they point out a crack in a shelf, don't wait for it to fall on someone before you take action. You'll not only keep your workers safer when you encourage them to report potential hazards, but you'll also boost morale and give them a reason to want to stick with you.

7) Clean up spills and broken glass promptly. Clean up all spills immediately, use highly visible warning signs in wet areas, and alert all workers to the need for extra caution in the area of the spill or breakage.

8) Prevent lacerations and burns. Keep knives sharp, provide cut resistant gloves and non-slip cutting boards, and train employees in safe cutting techniques.

9) Avoid electrical hazards. Check electrical cords regularly for any signs of damage. If you see any, stop using the appliance until the cord is replaced.

10) Hold regular fire safety drills. The kitchen is the most common site for fires to start.

FINAL WORD

Health and safety should be the utmost priority for commercial foodservice establishments. Identify potential hazards, conduct regular training sessions, and provide safety clothing to your staff.