Restaurant Safety Meeting Kit

What’s At Stake

Restaurant service providers, known as the “front” of the house include hosting staff, wait staff, and busboys. These workers may not slice, dice, and flambé on a regular basis. But there are **Hazards** in restaurant dining rooms that are on full display.

What’s the Danger

DINING ROOM HAZARDS

1. Wet floors and fast service lead to slip, trip, and fall hazards. Mop up spills and clean up spilled ice immediately.
2. Hurrying in a busy, crowded restaurant leads to accidents. Slow down when you are entering swinging doors.
3. Serving hot beverages and plates hot from the kitchen, microwave, or heat lamp can cause burns.
4. Clean up broken glassware or dishes with a broom and dustpan or pieces of cardboard, never your hands.
5. You may be on your feet a lot, lift heavy trays and tubs, and serve from heavy plates and pitchers.
6. Handling money and working in the early morning or late evening hours are risk factors for workplace violence.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

KITCHEN SAFETY PROTOCOL

1. Correct Attire. Footwear choice is overlooked and can be responsible for numerous injuries in the kitchen.

To keep kitchen staff safe, encourage them to wear closed-toed footwear at all times. Simply wearing close-toed footwear will prevent lacerations from falling knives, scalds, burns from hot water and oil, and chemical burns from cleaning products. The

material of the footwear should be heavy-duty and waterproof, and the soles should be non-slip to prevent falls.

2.Slips, Trips, and Falls. Liquids are a part of the kitchen, but they don’t belong on the floor. Slips (along with trips and falls) top the list of hazards in the foodservice sector.

Loss of balance due to insecure footing causes slips. Trips occur when an object on the ground causes a person to lose his/her balance. Slips and trips most often lead to falls.

3. Ventilation. A kitchen without adequate ventilation quickly becomes hot, smoky, and unbearable. This creates un-safe working conditions for kitchen employees who are required to spend long periods over cook tops, putting them at risk for heat-related illness.

4. Fire Suppression System. The most common type of fire in the commercial kitchen is a grease fire. Unfortunately, common water sprinklers won’t do a very good job of suppressing them.

The best method for containing kitchen fires is a fire suppression system. The system connects both to the range hood and the gas line, and, when tripped, will cut of the fuel source for the fire. As a secondary measure, there are nozzles installed in the range hood’s ventilation system which spray a fire suppressant.

5. Fire Safety Training. A fire suppression system is essential for a safe work environment, yet what’s equally (if not more) important is training staff in how to use the system, along with general fire safety tactics. Conducting a training day with the local fire authority is an effective way to ensure the safety of your kitchen staff. Staff should both know the location of fire extinguishers and blankets, as well as how to operate them.

6. Fire and Evacuation Drills. Regular drills will familiarize staff with the correct procedures to reduce the spread of a fire, as well as the best route to take when evacuating the premises. Keeping your staff well-prepared will reduce the potential amount of damage to property and protect both staff and customers.

7. Equipment Guards. Commercial grade kitchen equipment, such as Hobart mixers, grinders, and slicers, are essential components of any commercial kitchen. While these appliances make food preparation easier for kitchen staff, they do also pose a serious kitchen safety risk if they are not operated properly.

An effective way to prevent amputations and lacerations from poor equipment handling is to fit each appliance with an appropriate guard. The guard prevents fingers and hands from accidentally slipping into the working mechanisms, which is vital in a fast-paced kitchen.

8. Signage. Slips and falls in the kitchen are due to undisclosed hazards, like damaged floors or recently cleaned spills. When there are several employees in the kitchen at any one time, like during busy service, it pays to have adequate signage drawing attention to potential hazards so as to prevent injury and keep the kitchen safe.

9. Occupational Health and Safety Training. While occupational health and safety training is important for workers across all industries, there are hospitality-specific hazards you should address with staff to ensure kitchen safety. The most effective way to do this is by conducting a designated occupational health and safety training day.

10.Train Your Employees in Restaurant Safety Procedures. Investing time in training your employees is one of the most effective ways to make your restaurant safe.

11. Provide Your Employees with Safety Equipment. While training and preparation are important for restaurant safety, some tasks are best performed with protective equipment.

12. Operate Restaurant Equipment Safely. Train of employees is how to use kitchen equipment properly.

- Use equipment properly. All pieces of equipment should be used according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Avoid electrical hazards. Keep electrical appliances away from wet areas and check their cords for damage regularly.

If there are cracks, frays, or other signs of damage, stop using the appliance immediately until you can replace its cord.

- Prevent appliance failure. Have your appliances regularly inspected by a professional. Do not attempt to repair broken appliances by yourself.

13. Correct Cleaning Techniques. To keep staff safe in the kitchen, train them in the use the proper cleaning techniques with proper products. This way, you can ensure their work environment is sanitary, and reduce the risk of spreading food-borne illnesses to customers.

14. Sprains and Strains. A commercial kitchen can get crowded during meal services. Even if space is at a premium, it is important to keep commonly used items in easy-to-reach places. Repeated bending and twisting is not good for joints, so try to keep many of your tools at arm’s length or close to it. You should educate your employees on safe lifting techniques to avoid back injury when moving equipment or bulk ingredients.

FINAL WORD

There is nothing more enjoyable for people to go but for dinner. It is a celebration of sorts. But many of those same people do not appreciate works to waiters’ face in the course of providing service and enjoyment to the public.