

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Cafe and restaurant industry – Burns

Burns are common injuries in the food industry. Workers are at risk from burns and scalds when they are cooking food or removing food from elements. Examples of this are ovens, deep fryers, grillers and making beverages using steam or hot equipment such as urns and espresso machines.

Possible solutions

Separate your workers from hot liquids

- Consider alternative cooking methods to deep frying (eg microwaving, grilling, baking).
- Maintain seals regularly on deep fryers.
- Install a gravity feed chute on deep fryers to an external receptacle so that workers do not have to handle hot waste cooking oil.
- Develop and train workers in safe work procedures such as patting food dry before dipping in fat to reduce spitting, allowing fat to cool before draining it into a container and ensuring fryers are turned off prior to closing time.
- Use vegetable oil instead of animal fat for frying as it remains in liquid form when cool and reduces the risk of workers getting burnt.
- Install automatic food lowering devices.
- Install wheeled containers to receive spent grease from deep fryers. These can be safely rolled from the kitchen to the grease dumpster.
- Maintain equipment to ensure that lids are tight fitting, handles are securely attached etc on utensils that contain hot liquids.

- Ensure that all equipment containing hot fat is covered when not in use.
- Avoid carrying hot liquids or utensils wherever possible.

Prevent contact with hot surfaces

- Use signage to warn workers about hot equipment.
- Use “hot surface” stickers for stainless steel utensils.
- Use heat resistant equipment (eg rubber on the handles of utensils rather than metal handles).
- Open doors and lids of steam heated equipment away from the body.
- Keep pot handles pointing away from the edge of a stove.
- Place pans so that handles are not over hotplates.
- Use dry cloths to pick up hot items to avoid steam burns.
- Remove all utensils from pans.
- Remove trays etc from hot ovens with care, and an awareness of other things in the oven that may cause burns to arms and hands.

Train your workers

- Ensure workers know and use your preferred techniques for handling hot items.
- Ensure everyone knows and can use first aid procedures for managing burns.

Be prepared

- Have a first aid kit available.
- Have the correct type of fire extinguisher for fat fires in a handy location and make sure workers know how to use these.

For more information on burns and other workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au

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Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Department of Justice and Attorney-General

Information guide: Café and restaurant industry series - Burns
PN10262 Version 2. Last updated February 2010.