



Restaurant Safety: Workplace Exposures

Restaurants have several potential workplace hazards that can cause serious injury. FFVA Mutual safety consultants can assist in evaluating these exposures and provide appropriate loss control recommendations to minimize workplace accidents.

Restaurant Workplace Exposures

- Burns
- Crime exposure
- Cuts and lacerations
- Freezer exposure
- Slips, trips, falls
- Strains and sprains from lifting heavy trays, dishes and boxes

Developing a Loss Control Program

To successfully implement a workplace safety program, management must be willing to reduce and eliminate workplace injuries. Management must establish a 100% commitment for an effective injury-free workplace.

Kitchen Workplace Safety Tips

- Management should be encouraged to review the Federal OSHA standards for floor conditions (191 0.22) such as:
 - Aisles and walkways should be kept clear at all times.
 - Work surfaces are to be kept dry and clean at all times and wet floor signs used.
 - Floor areas subject to wet conditions should be covered with a non-skid surface or floor mats.
 - Ensure that all floor drains are unclogged and properly covered.
- Employees should be properly trained in use of food processing utensils such as knives and meat slicers.
 - A knife blade should always be pointed down.
 - Always slice food items away from your body.
 - Select the proper knife for the food items to be cut.
 - Do not use knives with dull blades.
 - Do not attempt to catch a failing knife.
 - Do not leave knives in sinks full of water.
 - Employees should be required to wear gloves when using a meat slicer.
- Ensure that employees are properly trained when placing food items in deep fryers. (Gloves, aprons and eye protection are recommended.)
- Waiters should be trained in proper lifting techniques when carrying food trays.
- Proper lifting includes:
 - Placing feet close to load, bending knees, getting a firm grip, keeping tray or load close to your body.
 - Pathways should be clear and knees should be bent and back straight when placing the load down.
- Freezer and food lockers should be equipped with inside latches to avoid employee entrapment.

Prevent Burns and Scalds

- Adjust burner flames to cover only the bottom of the pan and avoid overcrowding.
- Assume all pots and metal handles are hot. Touch only when you are sure they are not hot or when wearing proper gloves.
- Do not cook without wearing protective clothing, even in hot temperatures or environments.
- Do not lean over pots of boiling liquids.
- Do not leave metal spoons in pots and pans while cooking.
- Do not open cookers and steam ovens while they are under pressure.
- Do not overfill pots, pans, or fryers.
- Follow manufacturer's operating/safety instructions. Manuals are available through your supervisor.
- Lift lids by opening away from you.
- Make sure handles of pots and pans do not stick out from counter or cooking stove.
- Open ovens or steamers by standing to the side. Keep the exit door between you and the open steamer.
- Organize your work area to prevent contact with hot objects and flames.
- Report any faulty equipment to your supervisor.
- Turn off stoves when not in use.
- Use caution when working around hot oil.
- Use oven mitts that are provided and long gloves for deep ovens.

Crime Exposure Safety Tips

- All doors should be equipped with double cylinder dead bolt locks. All windows should have tamper proof locks.
- At least two employees should be present when opening or closing the restaurant.
- Employee vehicles should be parked in areas with good lighting and as close to the building as possible.
- Management should establish security procedures for making bank deposits such as:
 - Armed car service should be utilized when it is practical.
 - Drop boxes should be used in order to minimize cash in registers.
 - Employees should be instructed to hand over the money when confronted during a robbery and never attempt to confront the robber(s).
 - Managers should be encouraged to have minimal amounts of cash in registers.
 - Times for bank deposits should be staggered to avoid predictable pattern.
- Nighttime employees should be encouraged to leave the restaurant in small groups when walking to their personal vehicle.
- When restaurant closes, all doors should be locked.