

WORKING SAFELY IN RESTAURANTS



The restaurant industry is one of the nation's largest employment sectors, employing approximately 6.5 million workers in the United States each year. This industry also comprises one of the largest groups of workers injured on the job in the U.S. These injuries and illnesses are costly and damaging, both for the employee and for the individual restaurant owner. Job injuries and illnesses contribute to absenteeism, transitional duty assignments or other work restrictions, high turnover and higher workers' compensation costs. Common injuries in restaurants include burns, lacerations and sprains and strains. Many of these injuries are the result of slipping, tripping, falling, lifting and/or repetitive motions.

BURN INJURIES

Work-related burns are a leading cause of occupational injury in the U.S. As many as one-third of occupational burns occur in restaurants, totaling about 12,000 reported cases per year, although the actual number is projected to be much higher.

HOW CAN BURN INJURIES BE PREVENTED?

- Avoid overcrowding on the range tops
- Set pot handles away from burners, and never stick handles out over the edge of the range
- Adjust burner flames to cover only the bottom of a pan
- Avoid loose clothing when working around ranges, ovens or machines
- Keep sleeves buttoned
- Check hot foods on stove carefully
- Place sealed cooking pouches in boiling water carefully to avoid splashing
- Do not leave hot oil or grease unattended
- Ask for help when moving or carrying a heavy pot of hot liquid
- Use hot pads when removing items from the microwave, and lift lids cautiously to allow steam to escape

FRYER SAFETY:

- Provide grease containing units that dump automatically
- Provide fryers that lower food automatically into the hot oil
- Provide and use splash guards on fryers
- Wear protective clothing, use hot pads, potholders, gloves or mitts
- Shake off excess ice crystals before placing fryer basket in hot oil
- Fill fryer baskets only half way
- Raise and lower fryer baskets gently
- Do not stand too close to or lean over hot oil
- Keep liquids and beverages away from fryers
- Follow directions when adding new fat or oil and/or when disposing of oil