

RESTAURANT SAFETY TIPS



SAFER RESTAURANTS DON'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT

Here's some food for thought to help run a safer restaurant – safety tips in bite size chunks that are easy to digest.

FLYING KNIVES AND SWINGING DOORS

Without comprehensive safety training, working in a kitchen or serving food is a recipe for disaster – potentially injuring employees and raising Workers' Comp claims. To help avoid these injuries, we recommend training employees in:

- Lifting and material handling procedures
- Safe use of knives and cooking equipment
- Handling meat slicers, meat grinders, commercial mixers and other machinery safely; employees must be 18 or over to use this equipment

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration put together a full menu of resources to help. Check out their *eTools*¹ and *safety fact sheet*².

WHAT TO DO WHEN CROOKS DEMAND A SIDE OF “CASH” WITH THEIR BURGER

Operating a drive-thru or delivery service exposes employees to villains and violence. It's why you need a 24/7 safety-program to help protect your employees.

Delivery Safety Procedures

- Limit the radius of deliveries to only safe areas
- Use a caller ID system with address lookup
- Call back first-time customers to verify address
- Accept only credit card payment or limit the amount of cash that can be carried
- Avoid signage on vehicles

Drive-Thru Safety Procedures

- Staff at least two employees at all times
- Lock doors if restaurant / counter are not open
- Set-up ample lighting in drive-thru area
- Install security cameras and panic buttons
- Train delivery and drive-thru employees on what to do if they are robbed

¹ <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant/>

² <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant/posters.html>

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FIRE IS FOR COOKING – AND ONLY COOKING

Unfortunately, 59% of all restaurant building fires are caused by cooking. Deep fryers (9%), ranges (7%) and other cooking equipment (5%) just add fuel to this statistics – increasing the possibility of fire even more.³

Install the Right Safety Equipment⁴

- Protect all cooking equipment with vent hood and ducts equipped with a UL300 automatic extinguishing system
- Equip deep fat fryers with automatic fuel shutoff to stop oil from exceeding 475°
- Make sure deep fryers are at least 16 inches from any open flames, or install a steel or tempered glass baffle at 8 inches above fryer and other cooking equipment
- Keep a class K handheld fire extinguisher in the kitchen

Follow Routine Safety Procedures

- Clean vent hoods and filters daily. Have vent hoods, filters and ducts professionally cleaned at least once every three months to avoid grease accumulation
- Properly maintain automatic extinguishing systems and have them inspected semi-annually by a professional fire protection company

SLIPS, SPILLS AND CUSTOMER FALLOUT

Nothing hurts business more than when an employee or customer gets hurt.

If an employee slips, so will morale and service. It's one reason why The Hartford has partnered with *Shoes for Crews*⁵ to offer significant discounts on quality, slip-resistance footwear. For more information, ask about our Slip-Resistant Shoe Program.

If a customer falls in your restaurant, everyone hears about it. Injuries are easily avoided by following some common sense safety procedures:

Clean floors and mats daily, or more if necessary	Check bathrooms frequently for wet floors
Place mats where spills happen, and at entry ways when the weather is bad	Frequently clean, inspect and repair all parking lots and walkways
Quickly clean up all spills	Install handrails on all steps and stairwells
Promptly plow, shovel and remove snow from parking lots and sidewalks.; frequently apply ice melting products	Use wet floor signs

³ <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/statistics/reports/cooking.shtm>

⁴ Recommended controls are based on National Fire Protection Association 96 standards.

⁵ <https://www.shoesforcrews.com/>

KEEPING YOUR FOOD TASTY, SAFELY!

One of the hardest things for any restaurant to swallow and survive is an outbreak of a food borne illness. According to the Center for Disease Control⁶, nearly 76 million cases happen every year resulting in 325,000 hospitalizations and nearly 5,000 deaths. And unfortunately, 65% of these cases are linked to employees. Needless to say, food safety is serious business.

- Don't allow sick employees to prepare food or work with sanitized equipment, or other items used by customers
- Require employees to thoroughly wash hands and arms:
 - At the beginning of work
 - After using the bathroom
 - After eating, drinking, coughing, sneezing, or using tobacco
 - After working with un-sanitized equipment or utensils
 - Whenever switching tasks or food groups
- Prevent cross-contamination by using different utensils and equipment for the preparation of unlike foods

Here are some quick guides and further info on handling food safely:

- *Food Safety Gov. Fact Sheet*⁷ for proper hand and arm washing techniques
- *2013 Food Code*⁸ provides recommendations for specific cooking, freezing, refrigeration, and reheating temperature and time parameters for various types of foods

A COMMON SENSE APPROACH TO MANAGING LIQUOR LIABILITY

Here's a sobering fact. Restaurants that serve liquor are frequently found liable when intoxicated customers hurt themselves or others. It's why you need to take every precaution, including:

- Enforce a policy that no alcohol will be served to intoxicated customers
- Thoroughly train employees on how to recognize, prevent and intervene during an alcohol-related incident
- Conspicuously post signs stating customers must have ID proving they are over 21
- Enact an ID checking procedure and provide training to staff on how to carry it out
- Post names and numbers of nearby transportation services

⁶ <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodborneIllnessRiskFactorReduction/ucm122832.htm>

⁷ <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/clean/>

⁸ <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/UCM374510.pdf>

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