

Addressing Common Restaurant Hazards

Falls on Same Level

- Ensure that restaurants strictly adhere to the procedures defined by the floor cleaning product manufacturer. A typical protocol may include: 1) Use the proper amount of cleaning product with hot, softened tap water. 2) Apply cleaning product evenly on floor surface with a clean mop. 3) Deck brush the floor surface. 4) Post “Wet Floor” signs at entries.
- Train managers to teach and enforce a “clean as you go” policy (e.g., clean the work area throughout the day).
- Systematically identify and eliminate all sources of water on the floor (e.g., sink overflow or spray, leaking pipes or containers and breaks in counter surface solder welds).
- Develop and maintain a preventative maintenance program.
- Evaluate the potential utility of slip-resistant footwear or floor treatments.

Overexertion

- Use additional wait staff to serve parties of three or more in order to reduce the number of plates/amount of food carried at one time.
- Implement a policy whereby wait staff assist one another in food delivery and bussing of tables. This “full hands in, full hand out” (of the kitchen) approach helps to reduce the weights carried.
- Control tray weights and keep plates flat on the tray surface. As a rule of thumb, keep plates inside the outer rim of the tray.
- Store heavy items (e.g., bulk product such as potatoes and breading) between mid-chest to mid-thigh and use mechanical devices to transfer product.

Cuts

- Sharpen knives regularly to reduce the potential for cuts from knife slippage. Research has demonstrated that dull knives increase the force required to accomplish a cutting task by as much as 30%.
- Provide and enforce the use of USDA-accepted cut-resistant gloves when using knives or cutting equipment. Be sure to have enough gloves on hand and in multiple sizes.
- Use non-slip pads under cutting boards.
- Provide USDA-accepted cut-resistant gloves to dishwashers and other employees who may routinely come into contact with sharp or broken materials.
- Use designated containers for broken glass and plates.

Burns

- Change or filter fryer oil in the morning before equipment is turned on.
- Use a closed grease transport system (i.e., no open pots or buckets) when removing and disposing of fryer grease.
- Prohibit workers from standing on cooking equipment when cleaning ventilation hoods. Operations should ensure an appropriately sized ladder to limit reaching.
- Avoid or eliminate storage of objects above cooking equipment.
- Provide heat-resistant gloves to workers who reach into ovens or grab hot handles on pots and pans.