

Loss

Control



FARMERS

Information Bulletin

Burns in the Food Service Industry

One of the most common injuries in the food service industry is burns. Fry cooks are at special risk for burn injuries because of working close to deep fat fryers and hot plates or grills. A leading cause for these injuries is due to the pressure to keep up the production to meet incoming customer orders during peak service hours.

Other potential injury sources are hot oil and grease splatters and spills, transferring hot oil or grease, steam from hot surfaces or steamers, handling hot foods and beverages, and equipment such as stoves, grills and fryers. Deep fat fryers are the number one cause of burns in the food service industry.

Management has the responsibility for protecting the health and safety of their workers and employees are responsible for following safe work practices, policies, and procedures in the workplace.

Safety procedures for reducing workplace burns include:

- *Wear long-sleeve cotton shirts and cotton pants when cooking.*
- *Wear an apron for protection from hot oil splashes.*
- *Use appropriate hand protection such as oven mitts or potholders when handling hot items.*
- *Use tongs and oven mitts to remove hot items from boilers or steamers.*
- *Use a tray to carry hot steamed food products rather than carrying the steamed container across the floor.*
- *Stand to the side when opening ovens and steamers to use the door as protection.*
- *Do not stand above ovens or steamers to avoid hot rising air or steam.*

- *Do not open pressure cookers or steamers while they are still under pressure.*
- *Handle hot, microwaved products carefully and keep them away from the face.*
- *Assume that pots, handles, and cooking utensils are hot and use gloves or mitts to handle them.*
- *Reduce burner flames to only cover the bottom of the pot or pan.*
- *Do not overcrowd range tops with pots and pans.*
- *Wear full cover shoes that are slip resistant.*
- *Do not attempt to move heavy pots of hot liquids alone. Always get help and move slowly to reduce splashing.*
- *Keep pot and pan handles pointed away from the work and walk area.*
- *Do not overfill pots and pans with food products being prepared.*
- *Clean grill vents and hoods in the morning when grill top areas are cool.*
- *Do not pour water or ice into hot oil or grease or aggressive splattering will occur.*
- *Use wet or damp cloths to lift lids from hot pots and pans.*
- *Do not lean over boiling liquids or food products.*

Following these procedures will reduce the risk of burns in the food service industry but the employer is responsible to identify all sources of potential burn hazards in the workplace and to train employees in the safe practices for reducing or preventing burns.

By reducing workplace burns, you increase productivity and maintain competitive costs and overhead that allow you to compete equitable with others similar food service establishments.