

Loss

Control



FARMERS

Information Bulletin

Equipment and Machine Guarding in the Food Service Industry

The food service industry uses many unique pieces of equipment. Employee exposure to equipment such as slicers, dicers, choppers, mincers, microwaves, and mixers must be trained in the possible hazards associated with their use.

Be aware of and follow your State laws restricting workers under the age of 18 from using or cleaning certain equipment. Before allowing any workers to operate or clean any machinery, they should:

- *Be trained in the use of the equipment.*
- *Wear appropriate personal protective equipment required for the equipment.*
- *Use the machine guards provided with the equipment.*
- *Ask for help if they are not sure how the equipment operates.*
- *Follow manufacturer's instructions for use and cleaning.*

Mincers, Choppers, Dicers, and Slicers:

- *Use push sticks or tamps to feed or remove stuck food.*
- *Use any machine guarding that is provided to prevent access to the cutting blade.*
- *Do not bypass any safety guards.*
- *Do not put hands into operating machines to stir contents or guide food.*
- *Turn off and unplug the machine before disassembling and cleaning the equipment.*

Food Processors and Mixers:

- *Do not attempt to remove dropped spoons or utensils from machines that are mixing.*
- *Do not open processor lids to stir contents while the food is processing.*
- *Turn off the processor before opening the lid or adding additional ingredients.*

- *Turn off the machine and unplug before cleaning or removing a blockage.*
- *Use any machine guards provided with the machine.*
- *Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry that could become caught in the equipment.*

Microwaves:

- *Make sure equipment is located at approximately waist level.*
- *Follow manufacturer's instructions.*
- *Cover foods to avoid splattering while cooking.*
- *Use caution when opening tightly covered containers because pressure may have built up while being heated.*
- *Use appropriate personal protective equipment such as hot pads or mitts when removing hot foods.*
- *Make sure the door seals are in good condition and free of food or grease buildup.*
- *Do not operate a microwave if the door is damaged or doesn't lock properly since it may emit harmful radiation.*
- *Do not microwave metals or foil.*
- *Discontinue using any equipment that is sparking or is defective.*
- *Remember that microwaved foods can remain hot for a long time.*

Steamers and Pressure Cookers:

- *Do not open the door while the steamer is on, shut off the steam and wait a few minutes before releasing the pressure and opening the unit.*
- *Stand to the side of the unit when opening.*
- *Use mitts to remove hot trays from the steamers.*

Coffee Makers:

- *Do not place hot coffee makers close to the edge of the counters where customers may come in contact with them.*

- *Make sure that the coffee filter is in place before making coffee.*
- *Do not remove the filter before the coffee has stopped brewing.*
- *Do not stick your fingers into the chamber of a coffee grinder to get beans to drop into the grinder. Tap the side of the grinder to encourage the beans to drop into the grinder.*

In addition to these precautions, others may be needed for other equipment in your workplace. While safety precautions may assist with reducing workplace injuries, machine guarding may be required for some types of equipment.

Machine Guarding

When moving machine parts have the potential for causing severe workplace injuries such as crushed fingers or hands, or amputations; machine guarding reduces or provides better control of these hazards by providing additional protection for the workers.

Food service industry workers are often exposed to power-driven equipment such as commercial dough mixers,

choppers, and slicers that may be hazardous if machine guards are not in place.

Workers can be caught in the rotating blades of mixers, resulting in strangulations, broken bones, and amputations, cuts and amputation injuries can also occur when using or cleaning slicers or dicers.

Due to the high hazard potential of power-driven equipment like those discussed in this bulletin, it is important to remember that workers under 18 years of age are prohibited from operating or cleaning power-driven equipment in the food service industry.

Workers who are old enough to operate or clean this equipment should take the following precautions:

- *Do not remove or alter machine guarding provided with equipment being used.*
- *Wear appropriate personal protective equipment when operating power-driven equipment.*