Food Service Checklist



People in food services jobs such as cooking, busing tables, and serving food are exposed to dangers that they may take for granted – and some of them are deadly.

The dangers that food service workers may experience are as follows:

- Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)
- Cuts and abrasions
- Infections
- Heat
- Chemicals
- Slips, trips, and falls
- Electricity

Attention, constant vigilance and literally take nothing for granted in terms of remaining safe in kitchens of the world. The hi-lites of preventive care are set out as follows:

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

Results from sitting or standing too long, or from repeated motion such as reaching or lifting. MSDs may be short-term or long-term and may reoccur.

To protect yourself, don't lift heavy or awkward objects and don't lift above your shoulders. If you work sitting down, get up and move around; stretch and exercise your muscles.

Cuts and abrasions

Workers shouldn't use knives, appliances and other tools without proper training. Use steel-mesh gloves when working with knives. Powered equipment such as food processors should be unplugged when loading, emptying or changing blades.

Infections

The hot, damp atmosphere of a kitchen can breed bacteria. If you get a serious cut or other injury, stay home until it's healed. Cover cuts or injuries with a clean, waterproof dressing.

Heat

Workers in busy kitchens are at risk for burns and scalds. Wear long-sleeved gloves, aprons or other clothing Food Service Safety when working near hot items or hot liquids. Kitchen workers are at risk for heat illness as well, so make sure to take enough breaks and drink cool water often.

Chemicals

Cleaning solutions and mixtures used to degrease, clean and sanitize equipment can cause skin irritation, burns and respiratory problems. Read the directions on all cleaning products before use and use protective equipment such as gloves, goggles and a respirator if necessary.

Slips, trips and falls

Greasy, wet floors make it easy to slip and hurt yourself. Tripping hazards such as bins of ingredients are also common in food service areas. Make sure to wear proper work shoes with non-skid, insulated soles and reinforced toes. Keep floors and walkways clean and clutter-free. Communicate with co-workers to stay aware of traffic.

Electricity

Cooking, food processing and washing up require lots of power. Make sure to turn off or unplug machinery or appliances before cleaning, and turn off and lock/tag out power at the breaker if possible. Report loose or frayed wires immediately and don’t use the equipment until it has been properly repaired.

More Prevention

- Review security procedures with workers. Their lives could depend on knowing what to do.
- Create an incident report card for close calls and show workers how to use it. Make sure they understand that they won’t be punished for reporting safety problems.
- One of the simplest ways to prevent accidents is to have a pre-shift safety meeting. Talk to workers about taking responsibility for passing on safety information in an organized way at the beginning of the shift.
- Personal security is an important safety issue for food service workers. Review your company’s policies and procedures to protect workers from violence.

