

4.10 Kitchen and Catering

Contents

4.10.1 INTRODUCTION

The kitchen is potentially one of the most dangerous areas within a Service. It contains hot liquids and surfaces, flammable liquids and gases. They often have a number of people working in there, and floors are likely to be wet and slippery. There are also numerous pieces of dangerous equipment such as knives, mixers etc.

4.10.2 SCOPE

This section will provide advice and guidance on safe ways of working in kitchens and how to control the hazards that exist there.

4.10.3 HAZARDS

- Slips, trips and falls due to wet floors etc
- Cuts/abrasions from dangerous equipment
- Burns and scalds
- Chemicals present and used

4.10.4 WORK ACTIVITIES

All associated kitchen duties including:

- Preparation of food
- Cooking of food
- Storage of food
- Use of kitchen equipment
- Cleaning of surfaces and equipment
- Supervising people who use our Service

4.10.5 SAFE WAYS OF

WORKING Equipment

Many pieces of equipment are frequently used in the kitchen and present a risk to health and safety. All equipment must be used in accordance with the following guidelines:

- a) All equipment must be used for the purpose it is intended. This includes selecting the most appropriate knife for the task to be carried out. Knives should be kept sharp to help prevent accidents. (A sharp knife cuts food easier than a blunt one, and helps to prevent associated accidents).
- b) All equipment, where applicable, must be properly guarded for example, meat slicers, mixing machines etc.
- c) Training and/or instruction should be provided to those employees required to use any dangerous pieces of equipment. Only those employees who have received such training and/or instruction should be allowed to operate those pieces of equipment. It is the responsibility of the Service Manager to identify training needs and arrange for the relevant training/instruction to be provided.
- d) Any defective equipment should be taken out of use and all relevant staff informed that the equipment is defective.

Structure

Employees must report any defect to the structure of the kitchen to the Service Manager as soon as possible. Consideration must be given to the safety of users of the kitchen. If the damage is such that serious injury may result, i.e. if there is a broken electrical plug socket, then that item must not be used, and where possible, the item isolated to minimise any risk of injury to employees or people who use our Service.

Cleaning

Cleaning is an integral part of each kitchen and vital in ensuring safe food production. In order to maintain the kitchen in a safe and efficient state, cleaning must be carried out on a regular basis, and wherever the floor becomes slippery/greasy.

Chemicals

Only chemicals, which have been assessed by the Service Manager and have been subject to a COSHH Assessment, should be used in the kitchen. Employees must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment provided.

Condition of Floors

Floors in kitchens may cause slips and falls as they are likely to become wet or contaminated with food or grease. As such, care must be taken when moving around in kitchens.

Floors should be kept dry as far as is reasonably practicable. Cleaning floors should be carried out at times when people are not likely to be working in the kitchen, to minimise the risk of slips and falls occurring. Staff working in kitchens should wear sensible and suitable footwear. No high heels or open-toe shoes may be worn. Flat rubber-soled shoes should be worn to minimise the risk of slips and falls occurring.

Spillages

Spillages must be cleaned up as quickly as possible and where possible, a 'dry spot cleaning' technique should be used. 'Dry spot cleaning' is the use of paper towels/kitchen towel or similar to simply clean away spillages, leaving the floor surface dry. This is as opposed to mopping or 'wet wiping', which spreads moisture over a larger area, presenting an increased risk of slips and falls occurring.

Common sense must be used. Clearly it is not always practical to use a 'dry spot cleaning technique' however, where wet wiping or mopping is used, all those persons, both employees and people who use our Service, must be notified that the kitchen floor is wet so they know to take extra care when working and moving around in that area. A wet floor sign should be available and used in this event.

Hot Surfaces and Liquids/Foods

Employees responsible for handling hot liquids and food or operating in close proximity to hot surfaces or equipment, must take care not to injure themselves or others.

As far as is reasonably practicable, hot liquids should not be manoeuvred or handled in bulk. In any case, they should be moved as little as possible. Handling and manoeuvring hot oil from fryers (and other equipment) should also be avoided. Sufficient time must be allowed for the oil to cool before it is drained to minimise the risk of burns and scalds.

Any 'hot' equipment such as fryers, cookers, hobs, hot cupboards etc must be allowed sufficient time to cool before any attempt to clean them is made.

Employees should always use appropriate oven cloths or gloves when handling hot equipment, plates etc. These and tea towels must not be left on top of cookers. Care must be taken not to 'trail' them over gas hobs when lit.

Key Points for Employees

- Common hazards in the kitchen are:
 - Slips and falls on wet or contaminated floors
 - Burns and scalds from hot liquids and surfaces
 - Cuts and abrasions from use of knives and other dangerous equipment
- Any defective equipment must not be used. It should be taken out of service and conspicuously labelled to warn others from using it.
- Cleaning of spillages should be done immediately (where practicable). The 'dry wiping' technique should be adopted if practical.
- Only chemicals that have been assessed in the COSHH Manual may be used in the kitchen.
- Hot liquids should not be moved in bulk and should be allowed to cool before moving wherever practical. Equipment must not be cleaned if still hot.

Revision History

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