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1. What Causes Accidents?

Over a third of all major injuries reported each year are caused as a result of a slip or trip (the single most common cause of injury at work). These accidents cost employers over £512 million a year in lost production and other costs. This is closely followed by struck by objects, burns and scalds and manual handling.

2. Who gets injured?

Staff working in kitchens and food services are more likely to be injured through slip trips than by anything else. Young workers are more at risk from injury than other workers. Particular attention should be paid to the training and supervision of young persons from the moment they start work.

Three key points to remember and to act on are.

- Most slip injuries happen on wet floors
- Most trips are due to poor housekeeping
- Plan ahead to deal with any such problems during the busy periods when the pace of work increases.

3. Slips

As the vast majority of slip injuries occur on floors that are wet or contaminated the following precautions could prevent a slip from occurring.

- Kitchen floors should be of sound construction and in good condition;
- Floors should be kept clean and dry and free from obstruction;
- Use only the recommended cleaning materials on floors because the wrong chemicals may damage slip resistant properties or cause floors to lift;
- Spillages should be cleaned up immediately;
- Notices should warn staff of slippery areas;
- Proper storage must be available to keep floors clear;
- Kitchen staff should wear sensible covered in shoes.
- Maintain equipment to prevent any leaks of oil or water.
- Don’t allow things to boil over that could contaminate the floor area.
4. Trips

Most catering trip injuries are caused by obstructions that have been left in walkways and by uneven surfaces. The following are precaution that could prevent trips from occurring.

- Inspect floor areas for holes, damage or unevenness
- Highlight any changes in level and steps
- Make any slopes or gradients clearly visible
- Never allow cables or pipes to trail across walkways
- Don’t allow articles to cover obstructions
- Report any defects immediately delay could cause accidents

5. Scalds and Burns

Most scalds and burns are caused by spillages of hot liquid; hands, arms and feet are the parts of the body most at risk.

- Avoid lifting and carrying heavy or awkward containers or get two people to team lift where possible;
- Oil and fat should be allowed to cool before moving;
- Appliances should be cool before starting to clean;
- Use oven cloths and gloves and wear covered in shoes;
- Appropriate fire fighting equipment should be available.

6. Machinery Accidents

- Only competent staff should use or clean machines;
- Machines must only be used with their guards in place;
- Machines should be switched off and disconnected before cleaning or clearing blockages;
- Special implements (not fingers) should be used to push food into processors.

7. Cuts

- Knives should be used with respect and stored safely;
- Wrap broken glass and dispose of it safely;
- First aid should be applied to cuts immediately to prevent infection.
8. Fires.

Most kitchen fires start because of heating fat or oil. Please ensure that the following precautions are in place.

   o All fire extinguishers must be present and have the safety pin in place
   o All fire extinguishers must have been tested
   o The correct extinguishers must be in place for the hazard identified
   o Fire blankets must be tested if used
   o Ensure that you know how to raise the alarm

9. Electricity.

Electricity in the kitchen area can cause any number of accidents for electrocution to burns the following are precautions concerning electricity

   o Check the portable appliance to see that it has been PAT tested if
   o If the appliance has not been tested don’t use it
   o Periodically check cables and flexes on the appliances for faults
   o Report any faults to the appropriate person
   o Don’t use electrical appliances near to sinks
   o Don’t overload circuits by using adaptors
   o Keep leads as short as possible