

MICHIGAN



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY: Prevention of work-related injuries & illnesses through research & investigation

FOOD SERVICE WORK-RELATED BURN INJURIES IN MICHIGAN

Cooks, food handlers, kitchen workers, and wait staff are among the top 50 occupations at risk for an on-the-job burn injury. In Michigan from 2009 to 2013, 2,127 food service workers including 814 fast-food workers were hospitalized or treated in the emergency room for a work-related burn (24.3 % and 9.3% of all work-related burns, respectively). Approximately 2% of all food service injured workers required hospitalization. The majority of food service and fast-food burn events, (53.6% and 63.0%, respectively), were among young workers (≤ 24 years). More young men in food service and more women in fast food were burned, (52.3% and 54.0%, respectively).

Some Examples of Work-Related Burn Injuries in Fast-Food Restaurants:

- A 22 year-old male sustained a second and third degree burn to his hands and legs while emptying hot grease into a bucket, which melted the bottom of the bucket. He was hospitalized for 12 days.
- A 20 year-old female sustained a second degree burn to her hand while taking bread out of an oven.
- A 23 year-old female sustained a second degree burn to her hand from exposure to grease while cleaning a grill.
- A 23 year-old male sustained a second degree burn to his hand while cleaning a deep-fryer when his hand slipped into hot oil.

IN ORDER TO PREVENT SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE:

- Make burn prevention safety a key part of job training.
- Wear protective gloves or mitts when handling hot pots or cooking with hot deep-frying oil.
- Keep floors clean. Clean up spills immediately. Wear non-skid shoes to prevent slipping.
- Extinguish hot oil/grease fires by sliding a lid over the top of the container.
- Never carry or move oil containers when the oil is hot or on fire.
- Avoid oil splatters: Do not pour or spill water or ice into oil, especially hot oil. Shake off excessive ice crystals.
- Do not leave hot oil or grease unattended.
- Use hot pads or pot holders to lift lids from hot pots. Do not use a wet cloth.
- Wear long-sleeved cotton shirts, pants and aprons when cooking. Keep shirt sleeves buttoned.
- Do not lean over, stand or reach above boiling or steaming items or equipment. Steam can burn.
- Open ovens or steamers by standing to the side, keeping the door between you and the open steam.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The majority of people hospitalized for workplace scald and contact burns are involved in food preparation.
- Teenagers employed in fast-food restaurants as fry cooks are at special risk for burn injuries.
- In Deep-Frying, hot oil can reach temperatures of 300° to 500°F, making this task a potential high risk for burn injuries.
- Burn injuries result from:
 - Hot liquids, oil, grease and steam
 - Hot surfaces - stoves, grills, ovens
 - Fires from hot grease or oil
 - Exposed electrical wires, electrical appliances and equipment

RESOURCES

National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health
<http://cdc.gov/niosh/updates/teenfast.html>

Occupational Safety & Health Administration
https://osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant/burns_serving.html

Work-Related Burns among Restaurant and Food Service Workers, Oklahoma
https://ok.gov/health2/documents/Restaurant_Worker_Burns.pdf

