

WorkSafe ACT

Safe Work Procedures

Updated: Thu, 11 Nov 2010 08:39:02 +1100

Printed: Thu, 06 Dec 2012 17:25:27 +1100

Revision: 4

Overview

Provide written safe work procedures for all hazardous tasks performed at your workplace.

Safe work procedures are directions on how work is to be carried out safely. They identify hazards and clarify what must be done to eliminate or minimise risks. For example, you may need to develop procedures for handling cash or disposing of hot oil.

When do I need written safe work procedures?

Not all tasks require a written safe work procedure. It may be sufficient to address safety issues verbally when training workers. To decide whether or not a written procedure is required, consider the following:

- How severe would the consequences of an accident be?
- How often is the task done?
- How complex is the task?

In general, written safe work procedures are needed for:

- hazardous tasks
- complicated tasks, so that important steps don't get missed
- frequently performed tasks
- less routine tasks, if workers need reminders about the hazards and how to control the risks

What kind of task requires safe work procedures?

Examples of common tasks in the hospitality industry that may require written safe work procedures include the following:

- disposing of hot oil
- handling garbage
- cleaning up blood and other body fluids
- cleaning bathrooms, ovens, or swimming pools
- turning mattresses

Ideally you should prepare written safe work procedures for all identified hazards. The examples common

to most hospitality small businesses include the following:

- locking out equipment
- preventing workplace violence
- working alone or in isolation
- cleaning up chemical spills
- cleaning up biological materials
- conducting an emergency evacuation

Post the procedures prominently at the locations where the tasks are performed or next to the equipment used for the tasks. Supervisors and managers will find them helpful in training workers how are to do their jobs safely. Workers are then responsible for following the procedures.

Written safe work procedures help eliminate or minimise the risks of hazardous tasks.

Specify Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Written safe work procedures must list any required personal protective equipment, when it must be used, and where workers can find it. Certain tasks require the use of more than one type of PPE.

For example, workers may need to dilute concentrated, corrosive chemicals such as cleaning agents before using them. PPE required for this task may include face and eye protection such as goggles or face shields, as well as skin protection such as rubber gloves.

To determine the appropriate type of PPE, check the [MSDS](#) for the product.

How do I develop written safe work procedures?

The process of developing a written safe work procedure for a hazardous task includes the following four steps:

1. Determine the overall task that requires a safe work procedure
2. Break down the task into its basic steps
3. Identify the hazards associated with each step, and ways to eliminate or minimise the risks to workers from these hazards
4. Write the safe work procedure - the list of actions that workers must do when performing the task.

Sample: Developing a safe work procedure

This section describes how to develop a safe work procedure for a common hazardous activity in kitchens: cleaning the deep fat fryer.

1. Determine the overall task

The overall task can be stated as follows: Drain the oil from the deep fat fryer and transfer it into the oil dump drum for disposal.

2. Break down the task into basic steps

The basic steps are as follows:

- Drain the oil from the deep fat fryer into a container
- Transport the oil through the kitchen and out to the oil dump drum
- Transfer the oil from the container into the oil dump drum.

3. Identify hazards and risk control methods

The following table summarises the hazards associated with each of the basic steps and suggests ways to control risks.

4. Write the safe work procedure

After identifying hazards and ways to eliminate or minimise risks, you will be ready to write the safe work procedure. The following sample should give you an idea of the amount of detail to include.

Sample: Hazards and risk control methods when cleaning deep fat fryers

Basic step	Hazards	Risk control methods
Cool the oil in the deep fat fryer.	Oil in deep fat fryers is very hot- approximately 180°C(350°F) when cooking (flesh burns at 200° F). The hotter the oil being drained, the greater the risk of burns.	Allow the oil to cool before draining it. You may need to turn off the fryer a few hours ahead of time to give the oil enough time to cool. You can determine the exact safe temperature or time required for the oil to cool from the fryer manufacturer"s instructions and the type of oil or shortening.
Drain the oil from the deep fat fryer into a container.	The oil can splash or spill onto the worker who is draining it.	Fit a hose or tube to the drain spout of the fryer and carefully direct the oil into a container with a narrow opening.
		Ensure that the container is dry. Any water in the container may cause the oil to spit.

		Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including the following:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goggles and a face shield
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rubberised, oil-resistant gloves to cover the hands and lower arms
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a rubberised, oil-resistant apron long enough to cover the lower legs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • footwear with closed-over toes and non-slip soles
	Warm oil can warp plastic containers and cause them to give way.	Use a metal bucket or similar container, or a specialised container with wheels.
Transport the oil through the kitchen and out to the oil dump drum.	Warm oil can spill and cause burns.	Make sure the container is closed. Use a container with a tight-fitting lid, such as a metal bucket that has a metal lid with clasps and a tight seal.
		Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (see above).

		Make sure aisles and pathways are clear of tripping hazards and that the outdoor path to the oil dump drum is not slippery.
	The weight of the container can increase the risks of spilling and over exertion.	Use an enclosed container equipped with wheels so it can be moved easily through the kitchen. If you need to go up or down stairs and curbs, use a container with larger wheels.
		If you are carrying closed containers, consider their size and how many you need. Two half-full containers will be easier to carry than one heavier full container.
		Use a dolly to carry bucket-like containers safely.
Transfer the oil from the container into the oil dump drum.	The oil can splash or spill onto the worker who is draining it.	Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (see above).
		Use specially designed equipment:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some containers can be hooked over the lip of the drum and lifted from their base.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some metal buckets have a spout attachment so the whole lid doesn't have to be removed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some metal buckets have a handle at the base to assist with pouring.

Sample safe work procedure: Cleaning the deep fat fryer

Wear the following personal protective equipment during all steps:

- goggles and face shield
- elbow-length rubberised gloves
- a rubberised apron long enough to cover your lower legs
- non-slip, close-toed shoes

Draining the hot oil from the deep fat fryer into a container

1. Allow the oil to cool as much as possible before removing it from the deep fat fryer. Turn off the fryer three hours ahead of time
2. Use the designated metal container marked "For Hot Oil Use." It has a metal lid, a handle at the base, and is fitted with clasps
3. Ensure that the container is dry
4. Fit a hose to the drain spout of the fryer and carefully direct the oil into the container.

Transporting the oil through the kitchen and out to the oil dump drum

1. Make sure aisles and pathways are clear of tripping hazards and that the outdoor path to the drum is not slippery
2. Make sure the container is closed properly
3. Use a dolly to move the container. Make sure the container is securely fastened.

Transferring the oil from the container to the oil dump drum

1. Check that your personal protective equipment is properly adjusted to protect you from spills or splashes
2. Grasp the handle at the base of the container as you pour the oil into the drum.

Handle and dispose of hot oil safely

Newer fryers incorporate automatic draining systems that minimise the risk to workers. In addition, a variety of specialised equipment is available for safe handling and disposal of hot oil.

Contact your local restaurant equipment supplier for more information.

Many metal buckets have metal lids with clasps and a tight seal to prevent splashing.