Adventist Heritage

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Sent: Monday, October 7, 2013 11:07 AM
To: Adventist Heritage
Subject: The Secret to a Safe Kitchen

OCTOBER 6-12 IS THE NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Providing Risk Management Solutions for the Seventh-day Adventist Church
Over the years I have helped identify loss exposures in church kitchens, school, camp, and hospital cafeterias worldwide. I have also done site inspections at numerous restaurants in the food service industry, and while the size of each kitchen’s operations varies, many of the conditions that can lead to injuries or illness are similar. Common kitchen incidents are slip and fall injuries, cuts, burns, electrical shock, strains, and even food-borne illnesses. And let’s not forget fires.

...Continue Reading

Have you reserved your seat for tomorrow’s webinar? If not, DO IT NOW, before it’s too late
Have you ever had to deal with frozen pipes? Water damage from frozen pipes can cause serious damage to a church facility. This free webinar will focus on ways you can winterize your church facility and avoid these problems.

Title: Winterizing Your Church
Date: Tuesday, October 8, 2013
Time: 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM EDT
THIS IS THE NATIONAL FIRE PREPAREDNESS WEEK

From October 6-12, we'll be spreading the word that more fires start in the kitchen than in any other part of the home - and we'll help teach people how to keep cooking fires from starting in the first place.

Click here for more information

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Over the years I have helped identify loss exposures in church kitchens, school, camp, and hospital cafeterias worldwide. I have also done site inspections at numerous restaurants in the food service industry, and while the size of each kitchen’s operations varies, many of the conditions that can lead to injuries or illness are similar. Common kitchen incidents are slip and fall injuries, cuts, burns, electrical shock, strains, and even food-borne illnesses. And let’s not forget fires.

Before we begin looking at injury prevention for various types of accidents it is important to emphasize training of all kitchen workers. Ensure that employees are properly trained in the use of all hazardous kitchen equipment/operations. Major injuries have occurred during the use bread slicers, mixers, and even knives. In addition, do not allow underage students to operate hazardous equipment. Check federal, state and other applicable child labor laws on restrictions with cooking and baking operations. Some operations are often limited to those 18 years of age and older.

**HERE IS A QUICK LOOK AT SOME LOSS PREVENTION TIPS FOR SAFER KITCHENS:**
Slips, Trips and Falls

- If water or food lands on the floor, have an employee put out “CAUTION! WET FLOOR!” signs, and immediately clean up the spill.
- Provide slip-free floor mats with tapered edges around dishwashers and other wet areas.
- Look for and remove any ice buildup on freezer floors. (Some causes are: door left open too long, bad door seals, air conditioning service needed, etc.).
- Do not leave boxes and other items on floors where they might be tripped over.
- Do not run electrical cords across floors.
- Provide chains or other barriers across open dock platforms.

Cuts

- Keep knives sharp. (Interestingly, most knife injuries involve dull knives.)
- Do not cut food while holding it in your hands. Use a washable chopping board.
- In full-service food operations like cafeterias, provide washable, cut-resistant gloves.
- Do not use knives for opening cans or other unintended purposes.
- Do not clean knives in sinks with other utensils.
- Store knives on magnetic strips or in other appropriate knife holders and not in drawers where someone can be injured reaching into the drawer.
- If a knife starts to fall, step back and let it hit the floor. Do not attempt to catch it.
- Never use fingers to pick up broken glass. Sweep particles into a dustpan. A vacuum cleaner may be needed to get smaller shards.
- Place broken glass in receptacle and then in trash container in such a manner that others cannot be injured.

Burns

- Children have been injured in kitchens after reaching up and grabbing or touching pans. The best prevention is to keep children out of kitchens.
- Do not let pan handles stick out over the floor where they can catch on clothing or be bumped. Turn handles to the side, but away from other nearby burners.
- Remove pan lids in a manner that expels hot vapors away from you.
- For hand washing, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends setting water heater temperatures to 120 degrees F. (48.89 C.) to prevent scald injuries from hot water. Keep in mind, however, that for operations under the oversight of the local health department different temperature requirements may apply.
- Dishwashing temperatures vary during the required cycles and possibly by jurisdiction. Follow local dishwashing requirements, and ensure that temperatures and sanitation requirements are properly followed while ensuring the safety of workers.
Fires

- Never leave food unattended while cooking on burners.
- Do not leave food unattended when cooking in microwave ovens.
- Provide extinguishing systems over cafeteria cooking surfaces. Some are automatic, while others may require the pulling of a pin to operate. Ensure that everyone knows how to use the systems installed at your facility. (These systems also need to be serviced every six months.)
- Church kitchens generally will not have production type cooking equipment with extinguishing systems. Have a fire extinguisher mounted in the kitchen. (These extinguishers must be serviced annually.)
- If the contents of a pan catch fire, turn off the burner and place a lid or cookie sheet over the pan while deflecting the heat and flames away from the body. A damp towel can also be used. Do not pour water on the burning pan or attempt to move the pan until after it has cooled.
- Type K extinguishers can be used to put out cooking fires comprised of animal or vegetable oil and fats.

Food Safety

- Try to use foods within the first two hours after cooking.
- If any food hits the floor, discard it.
- Reuse of foods will depend on the type of food and ensuring proper temperatures are maintained on serving lines. Cover, date, and properly prepare and store any foods destined for reuse in accordance with local health department requirements. If in doubt, discard. (NOTE: Many potluck foods are set out on tables for a considerable length of time and are not maintained at the proper temperatures. There are also no sneeze guards or other shielding devices normally found on serving lines. Disposal of leftovers is recommended.)
- The danger zone for bacteria growth is 41 degrees F. (5 degrees C.) to 140 degrees F. (60 degrees C.) Maintain hot foods at temperatures of 141 degrees F. (60.56 degrees C.) or higher.
- Cold foods should be stored at 40 degrees F. (4.44 degrees C.) or lower.
- Do not store uncovered.
- Always wash hands thoroughly before food preparation, after bathroom use, sneezing, touching face, etc.
- Do not store hazardous chemicals and foods in the same area.

Strains

- Maintain good housekeeping and keep aisles clear.
- Train workers on how to lift properly.
• Place heavier objects at waist level to avoid reaching or bending motions that can cause strains.
• Get help with heavy or difficult to maneuver objects.

**Electrical**

• Ensure kitchen outlets have ground fault circuit interrupter protection (GFCI).
• Remove equipment with damaged cords or broken ground prongs.

There is really much more to kitchen safety, including training in the safe use of kitchen equipment, machine guarding, and food handling to name a few. Additional information is available from your local health department, as well. Whether you operate a cafeteria or occasionally oversee potluck preparations, understand the hazards that may abound in the kitchen and put controls in place that will prevent injuries or other losses.

*By John Dougan, ARM, ALCM, ARM*
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