



**Chapter 3**  
**Workplace Safety**

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I initially chose this profession because I wanted to understand the physiology of how our bodies process food and help others obtain good nutritional habits. As a Registered Dietitian with a B.S. degree in consumer sciences from Harding University, I completed my internship and did some graduate studies at Texas A&M University.



However, as I worked in both the clinical and the food-service components, I found myself more drawn to the foodservice industry, so I decided to focus on foodservice management. As a foodservice manager, I learned the importance of practicing good sanitation and food safety to ensure that the safest food was being served to the public within a safe environment. I then decided to take my current position, which involves performing food safety and workplace safety evaluations for numerous clients.

I believe that continual and integrated education is a key factor in the success of an operation. If you invest time and effort in providing a good food safety/workplace safety knowledge base and back it up by integrating continual education throughout your daily operations, the dividends will pay off with a sound foodservice operation within a safety conscious culture.

You will never be bored in the foodservice industry. This field is full of challenges; every day is different. However, you need to love what you do, enjoy even the possible problems that it brings, and be willing to work hard to overcome these challenges. Problem solving and communication skills are important requirements for succeeding in this industry.

I perform different types of workplace safety evaluations, but my favorite ones are the play place safety evaluations in which I get to revert back to my childhood and climb through the play equipment. Among other things, I get to bang on windows as well as carefully inspect for missing hardware and broken equipment. And I really have a blast coming down slides. However, my favorite part is when kids that are in the play place ask me what I am doing and then offer to help me. I get guided tours all the time! When the kids are present it reminds me that what I am doing is very important in helping to keep them safe. That is very fulfilling. Remember.

“If you have time to lean, you have time to clean.”

## Case Study *Safety First*

**A** local restaurant caught fire last night. Luckily, the restaurant was empty at the time, and no one was hurt. Upon hearing this news, Linda decides to move up the time for Uptown Grille's annual general safety audit. This includes an audit of the operation's facilities, equipment, employee practices, and management practices. After completing the audit, Linda meets with Chef Jean and the inspector to go over the findings.

The inspector finds a number of workplace safety violations:

- Boxes in front of the kitchen exit door.
- Backdoor exit gets stuck.
- The ice scoop is not in its dedicated holder next to the ice machine.
- Brian, the line cook, is seen carrying a large box, which obstructs his view, from the freezer to the kitchen.
- A waiter spills a drink and the spill is not cleaned up immediately. When the spill is finally cleaned, no sign is placed indicating that the surface is wet.
- Huge crack in a step leading into the restaurant.
- The guard on the electric slicer is off because the machine is being cleaned.
- Brian doesn't know where the MSDSs are kept.
- Chef Jean's apron is too baggy and comes below the knee.
- There is no Class C fire extinguisher in the restaurant.
- A cleaning agent's lid is unsealed and the cleaning agent is stored on an upper shelf.
- The food processor's electrical cord is frayed.
- The first aid kit is tucked away in Linda's office.
- The emergency evacuation plan has not been updated or discussed with employees in more than two years.
- The inspector is coming back in 30 days to check that all violations have been corrected and that any unsafe employee practices have been addressed.

As you read this chapter, think about the following questions:

1. Why is maintaining a safe work environment important?
2. How can falls/slips, cuts, burns, and fires be prevented in the workplace?

## About Workplace Safety

Workplace Safety is very important and should not be taken lightly. It isn't something you do to prevent insurance claims and or keep the insurance rates low. One of the biggest investments and assets a foodservice operation has are its employees. Therefore, providing a safe environment with adequate lighting, floor mats in key areas, good upkeep on fire suppression systems, functional electrical systems/equipment in good condition, easily accessible personal protective equipment, etc., helps to send the message to your employees that you care about their safety. You acknowledge that they are important to your operation.

Workplace safety also helps employees to be efficient in their workspace. Along with providing a safe environment, provide your employees with a sound knowledge base (the why) of the importance of safe work practices and how to properly use personal protective equipment. All this should be followed up by daily reminders and positive feedback on good practices observed during daily tasks.

### 3.1 Introduction to Workplace Safety

- Safety and the law
- Government regulations
- The safety audit
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Emergency plans

### 3.2 Preventing Accidents and Injuries

- Fire hazards
- Classes of fires and fire extinguishers
- Preventing burns
- Preventing slips, trips, and falls
- Lifting and carrying safely
- Preventing cuts

### 3.3 First Aid and External Threats

- First aid
- External threats

## SECTION 3.1 INTRODUCTION TO WORKPLACE SAFETY

Just as food safety is vital to an operation's success, so is workplace safety. The need to protect guests and employees from harm cannot be emphasized enough. With the right training and tools, you can help to keep everyone safe, including yourself.

## Study Questions

After studying Section 3.1, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- Who is legally responsible for providing a safe environment and ensuring safe practices?
  - What is the role of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations?
  - What are the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requirements for employers?
  - What are the requirements for storing hazardous chemicals in an operation?
  - What is the importance of general safety audits and safety training?
  - Why is it important to complete accident reports?
  - What is the purpose of an emergency plan?
  - How can protective clothing and equipment prevent injuries?
- 

## *Safety and the Law*

Every restaurant and foodservice operation is responsible for the safety of all guests and employees. Guests have a legal right to expect safe food served in a safe environment on safe **premises**. Premises refers to all the property around the restaurant. Employees also have a legal right to work in a safe environment that is free of hazards. Restaurants that fail to provide this safe environment for their guests or employees can be sued and can lose their good reputations, as well as large amounts of money.

Restaurant and foodservice operators are now more aware of their responsibilities—and possible liabilities—for their guests and employees. **Liability** means the legal responsibility that one person has to another. These responsibilities, or liabilities, are serious because they are enforceable by law in court.

Restaurant managers should be knowledgeable about the following things:

- What hazards are
- The necessary steps to correct hazards
- How to display proper warnings where everyone can see them

Remember, if an accident does happen, a restaurant may be held legally responsible by the court.

[fast fact]

#### Did You Know...?

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), approximately 160,000 American children suffer occupation injuries each year; 54,800 are serious enough to require emergency room treatment.

Some of this information may seem complicated, but safety for guests and employees is very important to the success of any restaurant or foodservice operation. An effective safety program helps managers provide reasonable care. **Reasonable care** is a legal term that means that an ordinary person would think that the operation takes thoughtful, careful precautions. It is impossible to eliminate every possible risk in a public space, and very expensive to attempt. However, restaurants and foodservice operations have to make their premises as safe as they can though. A safety program that is written down and made part of the operation's employee training program and daily procedures can be used as evidence that the operation took reasonable care if a legal situation ever arose. A safety program can raise the overall quality of the dining experience, lower operating costs, and increase profitability.

One aspect of reasonable care for the safety of guests as well as the health and safety of employees is how a business treats its youngest employees. Table 3.1 outlines The Fair Labor Standards Act.

**Table 3.1: The Fair Labor Standards Act**

<p>The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) ensures that young people—those under the age of 18—do not risk their health, well-being, or educational opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>16 and 17 years of age:</b></p>	<p>They can work <b>unlimited hours</b> except in situations that are declared hazardous.</p> <p>Hazardous equipment includes power-driven meat processing machines, meat slicers, meat saws, patty forming machines, meat grinders, meat choppers, commercial mixers, and power-driven bakery machines. They are not allowed to operate, feed, set up, adjust, repair, or clean any of these machines.</p>
<p><b>14 and 15 years of age:</b></p>	<p>There are <b>restrictions on the number of hours they can work</b> and what they can do.</p> <p>They can <b>work in food preparation</b>, but cannot perform any baking activities and only limited cooking duties.</p> <p>They <b>cannot engage in cooking</b>, except with gas or electric grills that do not involve cooking over an open flame, and with deep-fat fryers that are equipped with and utilize devices that automatically lower and raise the baskets in and out of the hot grease or oil.</p> <p>They can prepare and serve beverages and use machines appropriate for performing this and other work such as dishwashers, coffee grinders, milkshake blenders, popcorn poppers, and microwaves that do not warm above 140°F.</p> <p>They may clean kitchen surfaces and non-power-driven kitchen equipment only when temperatures of surfaces do not exceed 100°F.</p> <p>They can filter, transport, and dispose of oil and grease only if the temperature does not exceed 100°F.</p> <p>They cannot perform any duties hazardous for 16-17-year-olds.</p> <p>They cannot use power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, cutters, and bakery-type machines in any capacity.</p> <p>They cannot use NEICO broilers, fryolators, rotisseries, or pressure cookers.</p> <p>They cannot perform work in a freezer or meat cooler.</p>

## Government Regulations

The **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** is the federal agency that creates and enforces safety-related standards and regulations in the workplace. OSHA has specific standards and forms for investigating and reporting accidents, injuries, and illnesses. Employers are required by law to


inform employees of job safety and health protection provided under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970*. Every restaurant and food-service operation must display an up-to-date copy of OSHA poster No. 2203 or No. 3165, “Job Safety and Health Protection” (or the state equivalent), where employees can easily see it when they report to work. This poster is so important that employers cannot post photocopies or versions that are smaller than the original or changed in any other way. Figure 3.1 shows the OSHA poster No. 2203, “Job Safety and Health Protection.”

A restaurant or foodservice operation is required to report to OSHA any accident resulting in death or the hospitalization of three or more employees within eight hours of the occurrence. Other employee injuries and illnesses are recorded within six working days. In addition, each operation maintains a yearlong log of occupational injuries and illnesses, known as **OSHA Form No. 300**. A summary of these work-related injuries and illnesses, OSHA Form 300A, must be posted from February 1 to April 30 of the following year and easily accessible to employees. Figure 3.2 shows OSHA form No. 300.

**You Have a Right to a Safe and Healthful Workplace.**

## IT'S THE LAW!

- You have the right to notify your employer or OSHA about workplace hazards. You may ask OSHA to keep your name confidential.
- You have the right to request an OSHA inspection if you believe that there are unsafe and unhealthful conditions in your workplace. You or your representative may participate in the inspection.
- You can file a complaint with OSHA within 30 days of discrimination by your employer for making safety and health complaints or for exercising your rights under the OSH Act.
- You have a right to see OSHA citations issued to your employer. Your employer must post the citations at or near the place of the alleged violation.
- Your employer must correct workplace hazards by the date indicated on the citation and must certify that these hazards have been reduced or eliminated.
- You have the right to copies of your medical records or records of your exposure to toxic and harmful substances or conditions.
- Your employer must post this notice in your workplace.



The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act), PL. 91-596, assures safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women throughout the Nation. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, in the U.S. Department of Labor, has the primary responsibility for administering the OSH Act. The rights listed here may vary depending on the particular circumstances. To file a complaint, report an emergency, or seek OSHA advice, assistance, or products, call 1-800-321-OSHA or your nearest OSHA office: Atlanta (404) 562-2300 • Boston (617) 265-9860 • Chicago (312) 853-2220 • Dallas (214) 767-4751 • Denver (303) 844-1600 • Kansas City (816) 426-5861 • New York (212) 337-2378 • Philadelphia (215) 961-9800 • San Francisco (415) 972-4310 • Seattle (206) 533-9939. TDD/voice mail (TTY) number is 1-877-689-5627. To file a complaint online or obtain more information on OSHA federal and state programs, visit OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov). If your workplace is in a state operating under an OSHA-approved plan, your employer must post the required state equivalent of this poster.

**1-800-321-OSHA**  
**[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)**

U.S. Department of Labor • Occupational Safety and Health Administration • OSHA 3165

**Figure 3.1:** The OSHA poster explains employee rights as related to workplace safety.



[fast fact]

**Did You Know...?**

In 2008, OSHA inspectors inspected approximately 1,500 eating and drinking operations for workplace safety violations.

A hazard communication program is another critical OSHA requirement. The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is also called Right-to-Know and HAZCOM. This safety standard requires that all employers notify their employees about chemical hazards present on the job and train employees to use these materials safely.

**OSHA's Form 300**  
**Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses**

*Attention:* This form contains information relating to employee health and must be used in a manner that protects the confidentiality of employees to the extent possible while the information is being used for occupational safety and health purposes.

Year 20   

U.S. Department of Labor  
 Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
 Form approved 11/16/01

Establishment name \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*You must record information about every work-related death and about every work-related injury or illness that involves loss of consciousness, restricted work activity or job transfer, days away from work, or medical treatment beyond first aid. You must also record significant work-related injuries and illnesses that are diagnosed by a physician or licensed health care professional. You must also record work-related injuries and illnesses that meet any of the specific recording criteria listed in 29 CFR Part 1904.8 through 1904.12. Feel free to use two lines for a single case if you need to. You must complete an Injury and Illness Incident Report (OSHA Form 301) or equivalent form for each injury or illness recorded on this form. If you're not sure whether a case is recordable, call your local OSHA office for help.*

Identify the person		Describe the case			Classify the case				Enter the number of days the injured or ill worker was		Check the "Injury" column or choose one type of loss					
(A) Case no.	(B) Employee's name	(C) Job title (e.g., Welder)	(D) Date of injury or onset of illness	(E) Where the event occurred (e.g., Loading dock north end)	(F) Describe injury or illness, parts of body affected, and object/substance that directly injured or made person ill (e.g., Severe degree burns on right forearm from scalding liquid)	Death	Days away from work	Restricted work activity or transfer	Job transfer (other event or restriction)	Job transfer or restriction	Average lost work days	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
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Chemicals can be considered physical hazards, health hazards, or both. Physical hazards are chemicals that can cause damage to property and immediate injury (most commonly burns). These chemicals can be flammable, explosive, highly reactive to air or water, or stored under pressure. Health hazards are chemicals that cause short- or long-term injuries or illnesses. They include chemicals that are toxic (poisonous), carcinogenic (cause cancer), irritating, or corrosive (cause a material to be eaten away or dissolved). Table 3.2 lists some common foodservice chemicals.

**Table 3.2: Common Foodservice Chemicals**

Chemical Cleaners	Fuels	Others
Ammonia (Quats)	Propane	Carbon dioxide
Brass and silver cleaners	Butane	Nitrogen dioxide
Chlorine bleach		Fire extinguishers
Degreasing agents		Herbicides and fungicides
Disinfectants		Pesticides
Drain cleaners		
Floor cleaners		
Dishwashing machine detergent		

**[fast fact]**

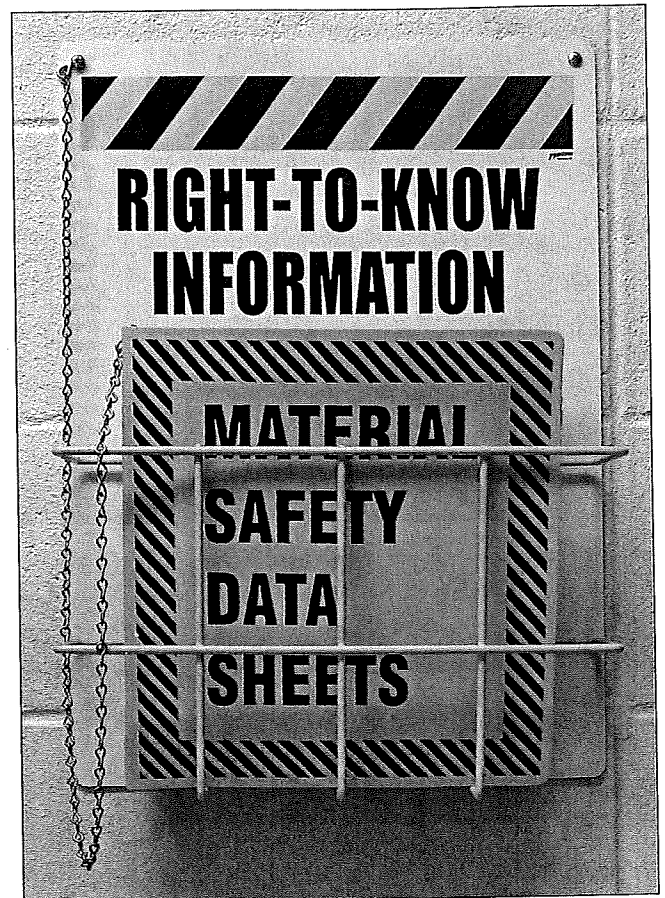
**Did You Know...?**

Nonlatex gloves are recommended to protect skin from hazardous chemicals. Latex gloves should not be worn because some workers may be allergic to latex. In fact, between 1 and 6 percent of the general population is allergic to latex.

OSHA establishes requirements for using chemicals. OSHA requires chemical manufacturers and suppliers to provide a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each hazardous chemical they sell. Listed below is the information about the chemical that is contained in the MSDS:

- Safe use and handling
- Physical, health, fire, and reactivity hazards

- Precautions
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to wear when using the chemical
- First-aid information and steps to take in an emergency
- Manufacturer's name, address, and phone number
- Preparation date of MSDS
- Hazardous ingredients and identity information
- MSDSs are often sent with the chemical shipment. Purchasers can also request them from suppliers or manufacturers. Employees have a right to see the MSDS for any hazardous chemical they work with, so keep the sheets where employees can access them. Figure 3.3 is an example of an MSDS binder.



**Figure 3.3:** Material Safety Data Sheets describe the hazards of chemicals in a restaurant or foodservice operation. Employees should be trained to check the MSDS for each of the products they use.