

#9-06

General Snack Bar Safety



Depending upon the menu offered, snack bars can have many of the same hazards as a commercial kitchen. The following topics should be discussed with all snack bar employees:

- **Wear appropriate clothing or designated uniforms.** Most important are slip-resistant, comfortable shoes and avoiding loose-fitting clothing or uniforms that may get caught in kitchen equipment.
- **Minimize Strains.** Identify and train employees to avoid or eliminate excessive reaching, bending, or repetitive motion injuries. Employees who stand for long periods of time, particularly on hard floors, should be provided with anti-fatigue mats.
- **Operate Equipment Safely.** Snack bars have various pieces of kitchen equipment. Employees must be trained to operate all such equipment safely. Supervisors should refer to operating manuals for grills, deep fat fryers, hot dog cookers, and other equipment to ensure that all safety issues are identified and addressed with employees. While this is particularly the case for new employees, periodic refresher training must also be given and documented. Lastly, all equipment safety guards must be in place and be used.
- **Avoid Slips and Falls.** This is one of the most common sources of kitchen injuries. Spills must be cleaned up immediately, employees must wear appropriate slip-resistant footwear, and traffic lanes must be kept clear and uncluttered to allow safe passage.
- **Avoid Burns.** Given the prevalence of heat sources in some snack bar kitchens, all hazards must be identified and employees trained to be careful around open flames, hot surfaces, cooking oil, and steam vented from cooking equipment. Appropriate utensils, oven mitts, and pot holders should be used by employees when working in the kitchen.
- **Avoid Cuts.** There are a number of cut hazards in food service operations, including knives, slicers, and machine parts. Employees must be trained to properly handle knives and equipment, clean up broken glass with brooms and dustpans or cut resistant gloves, and knives should be kept sharp to facilitate easy and safe use.
- **Handle Hazardous Chemicals Safely.** All employee must be familiar with all hazardous chemicals used in the kitchen by means of up-to-date Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). Training must be given in the safe methods of handling, storing, and cleaning up spills of hazardous chemicals. Safety or protective clothing must be worn when necessary.
- **Be Prepared for Emergencies.** After an accident or injury occurs is not the time for supervisors and employees to think about being prepared. The snack bar kitchen must have an up-to-date emergency preparedness plan, all employees must be trained in emergency procedures, a properly stocked first aid kit must be handy, along with emergency contact information.

Take Away: Snack bars can be dangerous places. Employees who work there must be familiar with the hazards, focus on each task to minimize the dangers, and be familiar with safe work practices.