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CHEMICAL SAFETY FOR RESTAURANTS

When considering the safety hazards associated with restaurant operations, most of the time, cuts, burns, slips/trips/falls, and back injuries are among the top hazards that come to mind. However, it is often that an inherent part of your operation, such as cleaning, poses an equally significant hazard to employees. Soaps, detergents, degreasers, sanitizers, floor cleaners and others are used in almost every restaurant. They pose a variety of hazards to those who work with and around them.

These Chemical hazards include, but are not limited to, the following:

Burns: Oven cleaners, drain cleaners, and grill cleaners can burn the skin and eyes.

Skin Irritation: Various soaps and detergents can cause skin irritation.

Respiratory exposures: Chlorine and ammonia can cause respiratory, skin/eye irritation or even death - and the hazard is increased if mixed together.

Infections: Broken skin can become infected or burned from contact with hazardous chemicals.

Protecting your Employees

Use eco-friendly or "green" cleaners where possible. They are safer for your employees.

Train your employees. Proper training will assist in understanding the dangers of the chemicals, the correct use of cleaning supplies, and how to respond in an emergency.

Store chemicals at lower heights. This helps reduce the potential for spills on the employee.

Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees. This equipment may include gloves, aprons, goggles, etc.

Install automatic chemical dispensers. Automatic dispensers can reduce exposure to chemicals and can help ensure the proper chemical concentration.

Make available the Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Employees should review the chemical's label and SDS which will provide instructions for proper handling and mixing.

Store chemicals in their original containers. If the chemical is placed into another bottle, properly label the secondary container to properly identify the chemical.

For additional information and resources on this topic and other safety and risk management subjects be sure to visit the Loss Control section on our website:

<https://www.amtrustgroup.com/small-business-insurance/claims/prevention>

Sources and Further Information:

Occupational Safety & Health Administration [OSHA]. (10/5/15). Regulations (Standards-29 CFR 1910.132, 1910.151(c) and 1910.1200). Retrieved from

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Safety Services Company. Chemical Safety and the Kitchen {Blog Post}. Retrieved from

<http://www.safetyservicescompany.com/topic/uncategorized/chemical-safety-and-the-kitchen/>

Parpal, M. (2015, August 19). Hazardous Chemicals and Restaurant Safety {Blog Post}.

Retrieved from <http://www.foodservicewarehouse.com/blog/hazardous-chemicals-and-restaurant-safety/>

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