

# Loss Prevention Safety Tip



Loss Prevention  
Program

By Red River Mutual

## COMMERCIAL KITCHEN FIRE SAFETY

As commercial kitchen technologies, equipment and cooking techniques continue to advance, it's important to be mindful of fire safety regulations and best practices.

### Fire Suppression System

Since every kitchen is different, it is critical that a certified fire protection provider assess your kitchen and ensure that each piece of equipment is covered by your fire suppression system. When new equipment is installed or equipment is moved, it is necessary to re-evaluate your kitchen suppression system and ensure all hazards are covered. Automatic sprinkler systems and alarm systems are also critical in minimizing fire damage, and should be professionally inspected as required by code.



Red River Mutual requires that your automatic extinguishing system meets the current ULC/1254.6 code for commercial kitchens doing any deep fat frying or grilling. This standard ensures that animal fat *and* high temperature vegetable oil fires are extinguished and effectively suppressed to prevent re-ignition.

We also require that all cooking equipment, exhaust hoods and ductwork, grease removal devices, dampers and fire extinguishing equipment be regularly maintained and inspected semi-annually by the manufacturer's authorized installer.



### Exhaust Ventilation

Keep your kitchen exhaust vents clean with regular cleaning of kitchen exhaust systems. Grease and oil are detrimental to the performance of a kitchen system. Grease buildup can cause a kitchen hood or canopy to crack, swell, blister or deteriorate. The most serious consequence of grease buildup is a catastrophic fire. However, it can lead to a variety of other problems, such as ventilation hood leaks, expensive repairs, voided warranties and unsafe work areas that violate health and safety codes.

### K-Class Fire Extinguisher

A multipurpose class ABC fire extinguisher is not appropriate for a kitchen setting. Be sure that your kitchen has a silver K-class fire extinguisher that is more suitable for the fire hazards present in commercial kitchens. Monthly inspections and annual maintenance from a licensed fire service provider are a must to ensure extinguishers are compliant with code and will operate as intended in an emergency.

### Fire Extinguisher Training

At least three employees should be trained to take on the role of first responders so that they can properly use extinguishers in the event of a fire. Safety training providers offer hands-on training with fire simulations and educate staff on fire extinguisher location, fire hazards, proper procedures and fire evacuation routes.



### **Use Appliances Properly**

Unplug electrical cords when an appliance is not in use and at the end of the workday. Cords and combustible items such as potholders, boxes and plastic utensils should be kept away from hot surfaces and water sources. Use only microwave-safe utensils and cookware in the microwave and utilize the kitchen hood to properly vent the kitchen.

### **Keep Appearances Neat**

Uniforms should fit appropriately and be worn correctly. This not only helps staff look professional, but prevents loose-fitting clothes or open jackets from coming into contact with an open flame or hot surface and catching fire. Additionally, workers should refrain from using flammable hair products and long hair should be pulled back and out of the way.

### **Ensure a Safe Way Out**

Fires can happen even after all of the necessary preventative measures have been taken. Should your employees need to evacuate, emergency lights and exit signs will be critical in assisting them to the nearest safe exit. Emergency lights and exit signs require monthly checks and extensive annual inspections, so partner with a fire protection provider to ensure your lights are operational.

*Source: Cintas Corporation*

## **See more loss prevention tips at [www.preventingloss.com](http://www.preventingloss.com)**

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