

Safety Basics for Small Restaurants

You may have heard that it is too complicated and costly for you as a small business to spend time and effort on health and safety issues. And besides, your restaurant is safe; no one has really ever been hurt. But did you know that as a small restaurant, if you employ 4 full-time workers and you only have one accident in 5 years, your injury rate would be more than double the industry average for all restaurants in BC?

Health and safety isn't complicated. Here are seven simple steps you can take to improve health and safety in your small restaurant so that your staff will not get hurt.

1. Provide a safe workplace

As an employer, you must ensure that all areas of your workplace are free from hazards. Common causes of injuries in restaurants include sprains, strains, burns, cuts, slips, trips and falls and acts of aggression or violence from your customers. Develop a safety plan. Tell your employees what you will do to ensure their safety and tell them what you expect from them to do their part. Make sure your staff has access to a first aid kit.

2. Inspect your workplace

Regularly check all equipment and tools, such as ovens, stoves, mixers, pots, and knives to ensure they are well maintained and are safe to use. Also check storage areas and review work procedures.

3. Train your staff

Take the time to train your staff. Tell them and show them how you want them to do each task. Providing written instructions and procedures is often a good way to allow your workers to check for themselves if they are unsure or have forgotten what you have told them. Then supervise them to ensure they are doing things properly.

4. Talk regularly with your staff

Meet regularly with your staff and include discussions on health and safety issues. Encourage their ideas and thoughts on improving safety along with productivity issues.

5. Investigate accidents

Look into the causes of accidents, even if no one was injured. See if there are ways to change procedures or equipment that could prevent similar accidents in the future.

By Terri Holizki, Industry Services Manager, Small Business Prevention Division, Workers' Compensation Board of BC.


6. Keep records

Keep records of all first aid treatment, inspections, accident investigations, and training activities. This information can be used to help identify trends in unsafe conditions or work procedures.

7. Ensure safety is part of your business

Safety shouldn't be an after-thought. A successful business includes good customer service, good inventory control, good financial planning, and most importantly keeping your staff happy, health and safe.

A commitment to health and safety in the workplace makes good business sense because it's the one way to protect your greatest resource – your people.

For more information contact the Small Business Service Centre at: e-mail, smallbiz@wcb.bc.ca; phone, 604-276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or 1-888-621-7233 toll-free in BC. 



That's gonna hurt.

Clean up spills and keep floors clean.
Wear proper footwear.

WorkSafe
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF BC
www.worksafebc.com

If you have questions on workplace safety, call the WCB Prevention Line at 604-276-3100, or toll free 1-888-621-SAFE (7233) for the rest of B.C., or visit www.worksafebc.com for health and safety information.