

Danger of working around hot-oil fryers

Attention: Restaurants, grocery stores, food carts and deli stores in Washington State

DANGER – HOT-OIL BURNS

The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) has received a number of workers' compensation claims for burn injuries from workers who slip, trip and fall when handling, cleaning or working around hot-oil fryers, as well as burns to the face and eyes from hot-oil splatters.

When cleaning, cooking, or adding items to the hot-oil fryers, floors around the fryers can become slippery. A slip, trip or fall can cause a worker to be burned by an accidental splash or direct contact with hot oil. Burns may be serious enough to require hospitalization or result in disability or even death, in a severe case.

The most common causes of these types of injuries are:

- Housekeeping practices, such as not keeping floor surfaces clean and dry to prevent slipping or falling onto hot surfaces.
- Adding frozen foods to the hot oil, which causes it to splatter.

What should I do to protect my workers?

- Train workers in the proper use and maintenance of hot-oil fryers, and reinforce safe work practices around hot-oil fryers. For example:
 - Train workers not to overfill or pour excessive amounts of frozen food or battered food into the deep fryer at one time. Overfilling can cause excessive splashing and bubbling over of hot oil.
 - Keep floor surfaces clean and dry to prevent slipping or falling onto hot surfaces.

Floors should be cleaned often with grease-cutting solutions. Recommend slip-resistant shoes.

- Do not store open or closed oil containers on floors by the grill area. Someone could slip and fall into the oil.
- Consider having workers wear eye protection or face shields when adding frozen or battered foods to the deep fryer to avoid hot-oil splatters.



Consider slip resistant mats. Ensure that mats and floors are cleaned nightly.

How can I prevent slip, trips, falls and hot-oil splatters in my workplace?

- Consider slip-resistant walking surfaces such as slip-resistant mats or slip-resistant flooring near hot surfaces and cooking appliances.
- Consider having workers wear protective glasses when adding frozen or battered food into the hot-oil fryer.



Let the hot oil drain properly prior to removing baskets.



Know the safety rules to prevent employee exposure to slip, trips, falls and hot-oil splattering and splashing.

- Develop and implement a tailored Accident Prevention Program that covers safe use of hot-oil fryers.
- Train your employees on safe use of hot-oil fryers.
- Emphasize proper housekeeping; keep floor clean, dry and free of debris.

- Conduct a hazard assessment to determine what hazard(s) are associated with the use of hot-oil fryers and determine if personal protective equipment is needed to eliminate the hazard(s) and protect your workers.

For more information, please see [“Slips, Trips and Falls \(same elevation\)”](#) at the [Safety & Health website](#).

Other resources you can access

Get an **electronic** copy of this [Hazard Alert](#).

Rules:

Rules that address Accident Prevention Programs, housekeeping, hazard communication, and other requirements for general industry can be found in WAC 296-800.

Visit the [L&I Safety Web page](#)

For other related rules, contact your local [L&I office](#) or visit the [Safety Rules webpage](#).

How can I get help from Labor & Industries?

The Department of Labor & Industries provides consultations, training, and technical assistance at no cost to employers. Call today to schedule a free confidential consultation or go to [Safety and Health Consultations](#) for more information. You may also call 1-800-423-7233 or visit a local L&I office and ask for the Consultation Manager.

*This alert was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSHS) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees to potential hazards associated with work activities. **This is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations.** The information provided includes suggested guidance on how to avoid workplace hazards and describes relevant mandatory safety and health rules. DOSHS recommends you also check the related rules for additional requirements.*