

Risk Control Bulletin

March 2015: LOSS PREVENTION FOR COOKING SYSTEM DUCT WORK

This bulletin has been released following recent cooking system extraction ductwork losses and is especially relevant for industrial-fryers. The following measures cover many of the risk control basics relating to cooking system extraction ductwork that will reduce the incidence of fire loss.

1. Maintain all areas around cooking equipment and extraction ducts free from unnecessary storage, waste materials and debris from cooking.
2. Avoid combustible construction (including roof void access platforms) where cooking equipment and associated extraction ducts are used.
3. Route flues and extract ducts through non-combustible construction or where combustible construction is unavoidable, adequately separate extraction ducts from combustible construction with non-combustible insulating collars at least 15cm thick.
4. Keep flues and extract ducts as short as possible with direct routes to atmosphere, to reduce the build-up of combustible deposits. Ducts should be vertical where practical and avoid horizontal sections and 90° bends.
5. Install appropriate automatic fire suppression in duct-work associated with fat-fryers.
6. Routinely maintain fire suppression systems, with a minimum 6 monthly service.
7. Provide extract ducts with easily removable panels/inspection hatches or constructed them in 1-2 metre sections that are easy to dismantle, to facilitate inspection & cleaning.
8. Complete in-depth internal cleaning of ductwork in accordance with a scheduled planned cleaning programme as determined by a risk assessment.
 - The assessment of ductwork cleaning frequencies to take into account the nature of the product 'cooked', the cooking process and usage of the cooker/fryer/oven.
 - Implement and regularly audit written schedules for cleaning.
 - Pay particular attention to known hazard areas, such as areas where excessive grease accumulates e.g. hoods, extract ducts and extractor systems.
 - Develop and implement written methods-of-work for ductwork cleaning and train operatives in these methods. Photograph ducts before and after cleaning and hold pictures on file.
9. Ensure that adequate time is given to ductwork maintenance during busy production schedules.
10. Subject external cleaning and maintenance contractors to at least the same standards as in-house teams and closely monitor their performance.
11. Develop and implement a suitable emergency response procedure to include
 - Raising the alarm and evacuating efficiently.
 - Managing the safe shut-down of the cooking process and extraction.
 - Liaising with the Fire Brigade and ensuring adequate access is provided to assist the Brigade deal with any incidents.
12. Prohibit hot-work (cutting and welding) on installed extract ductwork. Where hot-work is unavoidable, removed ductwork as required to complete work off the premises or in a suitable workshop.
13. Ensure the Business Continuity Management process is in place, up to date and that plans are reviewed and tested regularly to minimise any disruptions to production.

For more information please contact your RSA Global Consulting Account Consultant.