

NOBLESVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT



CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

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Fire Safety in Commercial Kitchens

Kitchen fires are a leading cause of commercial and residential fire in the United States. In addition, many employees are not properly trained to deal with a fire, particularly in a kitchen with the significant fire hazards present.

General safety items in the kitchen:

- Keep your kitchen clean: The area around all cooking appliances, including under and behind the appliances, should be cleaned periodically to prevent the accumulation of grease or trash that can cause or feed a fire. In a commercial kitchen, complete cleaning should occur at least weekly. Grease filters should be cleaned, empty grease traps as necessary, replace grease in deep fryers, and clean the grease that accumulates on floors, walls, and hoods.
- Keep your kitchen clear of combustible trash. While it is convenient to pile the boxes and trash by the back door, this creates a huge fire load, as well as an obstruction to exiting.
- Ensure all staff is trained in the proper operation of your suppression system, as well as fire extinguishers, and evacuating staff and customers quickly and safely.
- The hood and ventilation system should be professionally inspected and cleaned on a regular basis – the frequency is dependent on the type and frequency of cooking. Some systems will require inspection and cleaning every month, while others may only require cleaning once every several years. When cleaning, the entire system (hood, ductwork, and exhaust fan) must all be cleaned. Often the fan and ductwork is neglected in the cleaning process. Many hood cleaning companies take before and after photographs to document their work – ask for copies of them.
- The hood must be equipped with grease filters at all times the equipment is in use.
- All cooking that produces grease or grease-laden vapors should be equipped with an automatic extinguishing system.
- Extinguishing systems should be UL 300 compliant, and be inspected every 6 months by a qualified contractor.
- Ensure the hood ventilation exhaust system is in operation at all times that cooking is occurring.
- At least 1 Class K fire extinguisher should be present in the kitchen. Class K extinguishers are specially designed for grease fires.

Fires under the kitchen hood system

It is imperative that staff is properly trained. Here are a few training tips:

- Know where the manual pull station is for the suppression system, and that it is not obstructed. You may have to pull the activating device out up to 14" for the system to activate.
- Activating the system should shut down all electric and gas feeds to appliances under the hood system, aiding you in extinguishing the fire.
- In the event of a fire under the hood system, pull the pull station first, then find and use the Class K fire extinguisher if you can do so safely.

Disclaimer: This may not be a complete list of all code sections involving this subject, and is not the actual code that regulates this subject. Please reference the adopted codes in the state of Indiana (<http://www.in.gov/dhs/2490.htm>) for complete information.