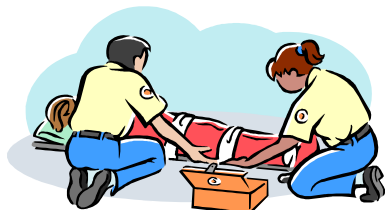


SIMPLY SAFE APRIL 2010

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Not a lot of people know this, but ... it is a requirement under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 that all accidents and incidents be investigated, although in practice this is taken to apply to all major (serious) incidents.



A local authority officer (EHO) following up a (F2508) report of a serious accident, will ask to see your accident investigation report. Whilst this does not have to be a tome of gargantuan proportions and can instead be a simple A4 sheet of paper (depending upon the complexity of the incident and the amount of information recorded), it does have to contain certain key information, as follows:-

1. Obtain basic facts, such as: Names of injured/ill employee(s)/customers/witnesses; the condition of any equipment; any chemicals, substances, equipment in use or present; the layout of area; the extent of any injury/ill health/damage/disruption. If necessary, use a camera, sketches and measurements to record the undisturbed scene.
2. Determine the circumstances surrounding the accident: What was being done at the time and what happened? What were the *immediate causes*, e.g. spillage on floor? Describe the events leading up to the incident. Detail the competence of relevant staff, e.g. instructions and training received. Were they aware of the dangers associated with the activity? What was the correct procedure for carrying out the task? Was it adequate? Was it being followed? What was the worst that could have happened? Has something similar happened before? Could it happen again?
3. Identify the *root causes*: Was there a failure in supervision, or a lack of training? Was the system of maintenance adequate?
4. What needs to be done to prevent it happening again? Review all relevant risk assessments. What controls should have been in place? What training should have been received by those carrying out the activity? What precautions were actually taken? What training was actually given? Are these consistent with the Health & Safety Policy?
5. Set out an appropriate action plan and record your findings.

Finally, be sure to establish at an early stage whether immediate action is needed. For example, it may be necessary to withdraw equipment from use immediately or stop an activity. Remember also, it is important to establish the underlying or root causes of an incident if you are to stand any chance of preventing it from happening again.

A TO Z OF FOOD SAFETY

T is for Training

Staff who handle and prepare food must receive training commensurate with their work. Bar and restaurant staff need only receive essential (level 1) food safety training, covering the need to maintain high standards of personal hygiene, cleaning and to protect the food from contamination. Kitchen staff require basic (level 2) food safety training, without which they must be supervised at all times. It is recommended that senior staff (Sous Chef, Head Chef) receive at least intermediate (level 3) food safety training, although preferably advanced (level 4) food safety training alongside Kitchen Managers. All kitchen staff must have a working knowledge of the principles of HACCP and how it is being applied within their own kitchens.



It is recommended that any training is refreshed every three years.

SCORES ON THE DOORS : UPDATE

The following article was published on the Food Standards Agency website on 18 March 2010: -

The Agency's UK-wide Scores on the Doors Steering Group met today to continue its work on development of the national six-tier scheme.

The steering group considered recommendations for a consistency framework for operating the national scheme. These recommendations should be finalised in April.

The group also considered the Agency's proposals for the IT platform and noted that development of this is underway.

Following media coverage about inspection of food premises and cost recovery, it was clarified that a national voluntary scheme for 'scores on the doors' is a key part of the FSA's food hygiene strategy but policy on this has not changed since the Board decision in December 2008.

Food businesses will continue to be inspected by local authorities based upon risk, regardless of their scores on the doors rating and whether or not they choose to display their rating. Local authorities do not charge retailers and caterers for statutory planned food hygiene inspections. However, under the national scores on the doors scheme, the possibility for local authorities to charge for any re-inspections or re-visits requested by a food business operator with a view to being re-scored is being considered.

In other words, watch this space!

PRESSURE VESSELS

Unbeknown to most people, in many workplaces there is apparently harmless and innocuous equipment that is taken for granted every day, but which could cause serious injury and even death if it malfunctioned by dint of the high pressures contained within. Pressure cookers, coffee machines, boilers, steamers and gas cylinders all contain a fluid under pressure. Failure can result from poor maintenance, operator error, poor design, or equipment malfunction, and any failure will usually be sudden and without warning. The Health & Safety Executive states that there are about 150 dangerous occurrences every year in this country, of which about 6 result in fatality or serious injury.

The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 and the Pressure Equipment Regulations 1999 apply. Any new equipment or systems must be suitable for its purpose and installed correctly. It must be manufactured from suitable materials for the liquids and gases they will contain. The equipment must be capable of being operated safely, without the need to climb over other equipment, through gaps, etc (those of you with over-stocked cellars please note). Any modifications or repairs to the equipment will require it to be examined (by a competent person) before it can be brought back into use.

You should have a comprehensive set of operating instructions for all pressure equipment, which must be followed by all staff. These should also include provision for emergencies, e.g. pressure or gas release. All relevant employees must receive adequate information, instruction and training before using any of this equipment.

Protective devices, e.g. pressure relief valves or shut down switches, must be fitted, adjusted to the correct settings, and maintained in good working order at all times. Any safety valves must discharge to a safe place, e.g. not at eye level directed to where staff members are most likely to be standing.

Any defects must be reported and measures must be taken to ensure the equipment is removed from service immediately. Any repairs must be carried out by an authorised, competent person.

Finally, ensure that all installed pressure equipment undergoes a written scheme of examination every year by an authorised contractor. Note that the suppliers of the gas cylinders will be carrying out their own examination. Without this, it is against the law to operate any pressure equipment or systems, but this does not replace the need for regular and routine maintenance.

