



Kitchen equipment and utensils

December 2019

Scope

This document outlines the procedures for health and safety precautions, that are to be taken, when using equipment or utensils that are used in the preparation of food and hot drinks, as well as the cleaning of the equipment and utensils.

Legislation

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) regulations 1992

Introduction

This guidance complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) regulations 1992. We will provide the facilities, procedures and resources to provide a suitable and sufficient health and safety management system. We will ensure the safety of all our employees through risk assessment and training.

This guidance is in place to help avoid situations where employees or visitors may encounter spills, slips, falls, burning, scalding, cuts and food poisoning through the use of food preparation equipment in the canteen.

We understand that one of our most valuable assets are our employees. Nothing is more important than their health, safety and well-being. All our employees and their families rely on our commitment to provide them with a safe working environment.

Definitions

For this guidance the following definitions apply:

Microwave	A microwave oven that cooks food and liquids very quickly.
Kettle	A device in which water is boiled, having a lid, spout, plug and handle.
Kitchen knife	A kitchen knife that has a very sharp blade that is intended to be used in food preparation.
Toaster	A toaster is a piece of electrical equipment used to toast bread.
Dishwasher	Is a machine for cleaning dishes, glasses, mugs or cups and cutlery automatically.

Applications

This guidance applies to all employees and visitors who may at some point, use any or all of the above equipment in the preparation of their food, either for themselves or another person as requested to do so or carry out without being asked.

Microwave

- Do not heat sealed containers in a microwave oven
- Care must be taken when cooking as a loosened cap or lid resting upon the container, poses a significant risk since microwave ovens can heat material so quickly that the lid can move downward against the threads, which then could seal the items within containers exploding either in the oven or shortly after removal
- No metal objects of any kind should be placed in a microwave oven. This includes aluminium foil and utensils of any kind
- Users need to take care to avoid overheating liquids (super-heat) in a microwave oven. It is possible to raise water to a temperature greater than the normal boiling point; when this occurs, any disturbance to the liquid can trigger violent boiling that could result in severe burns and scalding of not only yourself but others who are nearby
- Extra care must be taken when removing a heated item from the microwave, especially if there are any liquids involved
- You must ensure that you allow the item to cool for at least 1 min before removing from the microwave and where possible a towel should be used to handle the cooked item
- You must only move the cooked item from the microwave to the worktop surface. Under no circumstances must you walk around the kitchen with the cooked item
- While there is no requirement for the testing of microwave leakage, regular visual inspections are recommended to check for the following:
 - The sealing surfaces are clean and do not show any sign of damage
 - The door closes cleanly and there is no distortion of the frame
 - The window panel is not damaged
 - The door is not damaged in any way
 - If any of the above occurs, then the office manager must be informed immediately, and the microwave must be removed from use immediately

Kettle

- If your kettle has a cord, make sure it's kept out of the way to prevent any tugging on it
- Make sure it has 'boil-dry' protection. This automatically turns the kettle off if the kettle does not contain enough water or when the water has boiled
- If it is cracked or damaged in any way, stop using it and advise the office manager who will either contact the retailer or buy a new one
- Ensure that you do not touch the outside of the kettle as it can become very hot, even up to a couple of minutes after the kettle has been used
- If you notice a burning smell or any unusual noises, unplug the kettle immediately and advise the office manager who will either contact the retailer or buy a new one
- Be extra careful when pouring the hot water into a cup or mug, the hot water can scald you and others who may be in the vicinity
- Also be aware that steam is released from the spout whilst it is boiling, this area is extremely hot and dangerous. At no point should you put any part of your body near the spout and nor should you encourage anyone else to do this

Sharp Kitchen Knives

- Use a knife suitable for the task and for the food you are cutting
- Cut on a stable surface
- Handle knives carefully when washing up by hand
- Do not leave the knife in a bowl of soapy water where it cannot be seen
- Carry a knife by the handle with the blade pointing downwards with the blade directed to the rear
- Store knives securely after use

- Do not leave knives loose on worktop surfaces, where they can be accidentally fall or be pushed off the worktop
- Do not try to catch a falling knife
- Do not attempt to use the knife as a can opener
- Do not engage in horseplay with a knife which includes carrying a knife in your pocket
- Do take your time when cutting to prevent any knife injuries
- If handing a knife to a colleague, place it on the worktop so that they pick the knife up themselves
- Do not lick the knife or encourage others to do this
- When cutting, ensure that the thumb is tucked underneath your hand to avoid any mishaps

Toaster

- Never stick anything into a toaster whilst it is in use, such as a knife or a body part, as there is a potential you will suffer a severe electric shock
- Make sure you clean out the crumb tray frequently. This will help keep the toaster working correctly and prevent a fire
- If you notice an odd smell or any sparking, unplug the toaster immediately and advise the office manager who will either contact the retailer or buy a new one
- Always store the toaster away from the sink or any liquids that could spill on it
- When the toaster is turned off at the socket or unplugged, wipe the toaster down regularly, but never use water or any sort of cleaner inside it
- If it's cracked or damaged in any way, stop using it and advise the office manager who will either contact the retailer or buy a new one
- Do not touch or place your hands on or near the top surface, it will become very hot whilst in use and will remain so for some time after use

Dishwasher

- Place sharp items, like knives, with points down in the utensil basket; If this is not possible, they must be placed blade down, and flat on the dishwasher cleaning tray
- Carefully place glassware in the dishwasher to prevent breaking/chipping. Make sure they can't rattle against each other when the dishes and glasses are sprayed with the water or when you slide the rack in or out
- Avoid overloading the trays as glasses and plates can become chipped or break
- If you notice any item that becomes damaged in any way, place in a separate area to be removed to a bin at the earliest opportunity. Do not rely on others to remove the damaged items to the outside bin
- Allow the machine to cool after the cleaning cycle is complete before reaching in, so as to prevent burns or scalding from the steam
- After loading or unloading the dishwasher, close the door, so others won't fall over it
- Like all household cleaning products, store automatic dishwashing detergent safely and securely
- Read the dishwashing detergent label and follow the directions
- Don't fill the dispenser cups until you're ready to run the dishwasher.
- Don't mix dishwashing detergent with other cleaning products, irritating and poisonous fumes could be the result causing burns or respiratory damage
- Keep detergent in original container with the label intact, never reuse the container for any other purpose
- Avoid direct contact between gel detergent and skin or clothes
- Do not attempt to open the door whilst the dishwasher in operation as hot water could splash out of the machine and scald or burn exposed skin; you must not encourage anyone else to do this either