

Facility Safety

## Receive a Safety Refresher During Burn Awareness Week

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Make sure employees use proper personal protection equipment when dealing with scalding hot liquids.

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### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Scalds – The Silent Killer.**

**Best safety practices for different settings.**

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Burn Awareness Week begins on February 4, 2018. The campaign, which is run by the American Burn Association, focuses on increasing public alertness of scalds.

#### Scalds – the silent killer

Between 2003 and 2012, burn centers across the U.S. found that 34 percent of all admissions were related to scalds, according to the ABA. They can cause first-, second- and third-degree burns – just as a fire can. In fact, whether it be from scald or fire, a burn injury occurs every single minute.

The ABA reported that each year, 450,000 burn injuries require treatment. This is growing at an alarming rate that has jumped 4 percent in the last eight years. With 8 percent of scalds in the last decade coming from occupational hazards, it's abundantly clear that workplaces need to take better care of employees and prevent these types of injuries.

Scalds occur quickly and can be deadly if they cover a large percent of the body. It doesn't take long at certain temperatures for a third-degree burn to take place:

- A person exposed to 133 degree Fahrenheit water for 15 seconds can burn, according to The Burn Foundation.
- Just 5 seconds of exposure at 140 degrees.
- Only 2 seconds at 149 degrees.
- 1 second at 156 degrees.

Stop scalding in its track by implementing preventable measures in the work environment.

## Best safety practices for different settings

**Safety signs** should be placed near potentially dangerous machinery, or above common high heat areas, to warn of scald injuries. This can be in a laboratory, a manufacturing plant or a restaurant kitchen – anywhere an employee can touch a surface or liquid that exceeds 120 degrees. Can't find what you're looking for? Consider creating a custom sign to fit your need.

**Ensure employees are aware of any machinery that can scald during operation.**

All worksites should test water from the faucet regularly to determine if the hot water heater is in proper working condition. A glitch in the system can bump the temperature up, and if it's unexpected it could cause prolonged exposure due to shock.

Restaurants need to make all employees aware of the precautions they need to take when handling pots filled with boiling water, and food that can burn. Always use oven mitts to hold anything that has been heated up on the stove or in the oven. Waiters and customers should be warned if plates are hot.

Warehouses and manufacturing plants should warn employees of potential scald risks that can occur with certain machines that regularly overheat. Even brushing past a machine that has an external temperature of over 100 degrees can leave a nasty mark. Anything warmer and you're talking about a serious injury.

Provide hassle-free exits and entrances in worksites that commonly require employees to move around with extremely hot liquids or machinery. Consider implementing a safety program which covers the basics of handling hot objects and food, as well as what to do if a scald does occur. Some things, like using a dry towel to handle an extremely hot tray, aren't common knowledge for everybody. A common mistake would be using a cold towel to handle it.

Always enforce safe working procedures and conduct routine checks to ensure employee safety when it comes to hot equipment. If a fryer is left on overnight by accident, the person using it in the morning will risk finding out the hard way.

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