



The Restaurant Supervisor Safety Training Program was developed by the Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP) at the University of California, Berkeley, with funding from the Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation and from the State Compensation Insurance Fund. This program is part of the Commission's Worker Occupational Safety and Health Training and Education Plan (WOSHTEP).

Labor Occupational Health Program  
University of California, Berkeley  
2223 Fulton St., 4th Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94720-5120  
(510) 642-5507  
*www.lohp.org*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The following materials in this packet have been adapted from the Teen-Worker Restaurant Safety Program Materials of the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries: Restaurant Employee Safety Orientation Checklist, Model Shoe Policy, the Rated R sticker, and portions of the safety Tip Sheets.

# RESTAURANT SAFETY TRAINING GUIDE



# Restaurant Safety Training Guide

“This program was a great experience. We ended up with simple training materials that I can use with my staff to teach about health and safety in our restaurant. It’s amazing the respect they have for the safety situation now.”

– Hector Garcia, Store Manager, Picante, Berkeley, CA

## TO THE TRAINER:

There are hazards in any workplace that can cause injuries and/or illnesses for the people who work there. Injuries and illnesses on the job are costly and damaging, both for the individual employee who gets hurt and for your restaurant as a business. Job injuries and illnesses contribute to high turnover, absenteeism, higher workers’ compensation costs, and unhappy, less productive staff.

In a restaurant, common injuries include cuts, burns, falls, and strains and sprains from lifting. There are also repetitive motion injuries and injuries from robberies and assaults.

One of the best strategies to prevent job injuries and illnesses is regular health and safety training for employees. Regular training helps employees learn how to avoid hazards, keeps lines of communication open between you and your employees about hazards you may not be aware of, and lets employees know that you are serious about promoting sound safety policies and work practices in your restaurant.

This short training program is designed to help you work together with your staff to design a creative, simple health and safety plan for your restaurant. Involving your staff in identifying potential problems is an effective way to get employee buy-in regarding the importance of health and safety. This training can also help you meet some of the requirements of Cal/OSHA’s Injury and Illness Prevention Program standard. In addition to training, part of your plan should be regular safety meetings to discuss the hazards in your restaurant and generate ideas for correcting them.

## SUPERVISOR’S SAFETY TIP

It’s not enough just to tell employees to “be more careful” at work to avoid injury or illness. Staff, especially new employees and younger employees, need training, mentoring, and practice to stay safe on the job. The safest restaurant is one in which you, as the employer, eliminate as many hazards as possible through your own careful planning and good decision-making about how work gets done.

## OVERVIEW OF THIS TRAINING

To complete this training, you will need to schedule a one-hour meeting, or two meetings of about 30 minutes each, with your whole restaurant staff. Additional 20–30 minute safety meetings can be scheduled later to continue discussion of specific hazards that came up during the initial training.

**Meeting #1: Identifying Hazards.** Employees will use a checklist to identify key hazards in your restaurant. They will mark the hazards with Post-it notes during a walk-through of the restaurant. As an alternative, they may draw a simple floor plan of the restaurant and mark the hazards on this “hazard map.”

**Meeting #2: Controlling Hazards.** Employees will learn about strategies for controlling workplace hazards. Working in pairs, they will “brainstorm” and discuss concrete steps that can be taken to correct the most significant hazards they identified before. These steps will include both changes that can be made by management and changes they can make themselves in doing their work.

### Materials needed

- Large sheets of flipchart paper
- Markers for drawing
- Post-it notes
- Copies of handouts for all participants (masters for copying are provided here):
  - #1: Restaurant Hazards Checklist*
  - #2: Making Restaurants Safer*
  - #3: Hazard Identification and Control Worksheet*
- Copies of seven “Tip Sheets” for all participants (masters for copying are provided here):
  - Preventing Burns from Hot Stuff*
  - Preventing Cuts from Sharp Stuff*
  - Preventing Injuries from Slips and Falls*
  - Preventing Injuries from Ergonomic Hazards*
  - Preventing Injuries from Robberies and Assaults*
  - Planning for Emergencies on the Job*
  - Dealing with Injuries on the Job*

### TRAINER'S TIP

If you don't have regular flipchart paper, you could use:

- A sheet of cardboard from a large box
- An old, light-colored tablecloth
- Several unfolded paper bags taped together
- Other materials you find around the restaurant—be creative!

# Meeting #1: Identifying Hazards (30 minutes)

## INTRODUCTION

- Decide ahead of time whether you will have participants do this exercise as a walk-through investigation using Post-it notes, or as a hazard mapping activity (see below for a description of both activities).
- Introduce the topic by making the points below. Put them in your own words if possible.
  - According to employer reports, over 27,000 restaurant employees are injured on the job every year in California. Most of these injuries can be prevented. Good employers care about safety and don't want injuries to happen. Preventing injuries requires a partnership between employees and management.
  - During this safety training we will work together to identify the main hazards in the restaurant, discuss what is already being done to keep employees safe, and decide what could be changed to better protect workers. Employees and managers will work together to develop specific recommendations for changes that can be made.
- Tell the group that a **job hazard** is anything at work that can injure you or make you sick. Some job hazards are very obvious, but others are not. Some hazards harm you right away, but others harm you over time, such as certain chemicals, or doing a job with repetitive motions.
- Ask the group if they can name a few possible restaurant hazards. Don't try to make a complete list. Make sure participants understand that this training is **not** about food safety, but about their safety as employees. If they begin listing types of injuries, ask them what **hazards** cause those injuries.
- Next, do either the Restaurant Walk-through **OR** the Hazard Mapping activity.

## RESTAURANT WALK-THROUGH

- Ask each participant to choose a partner.
- Pass out Handout #1, pens or pencils, and three Post-it note sheets to each pair.



- Ask each pair to take about five minutes to go through the *Restaurant Hazards Checklist* (Handout #1) and use it to think about all the hazards in the restaurant.
- Once they have done this, ask them to decide which three specific hazards in your restaurant they are most concerned about. Ask them to walk through the restaurant, and to put a Post-it note on each of the three hazards they chose. They should also circle these three hazards on Handout #1. Explain that it is OK to have more than one Post-it note in the same location. If there is a hazard, such as stress or lifting, that cannot easily be marked in a particular place, they can mark it on their body by sticking a Post-it note on themselves, or explain it during the wrap-up section of this activity.
- Once everyone has completed this task, ask the group to notice where the Post-it notes have been placed, and which areas of the restaurant have the most Post-it notes. Ask them to gather as a group again.
- Skip the next section and go to the “Wrap Up” section below.

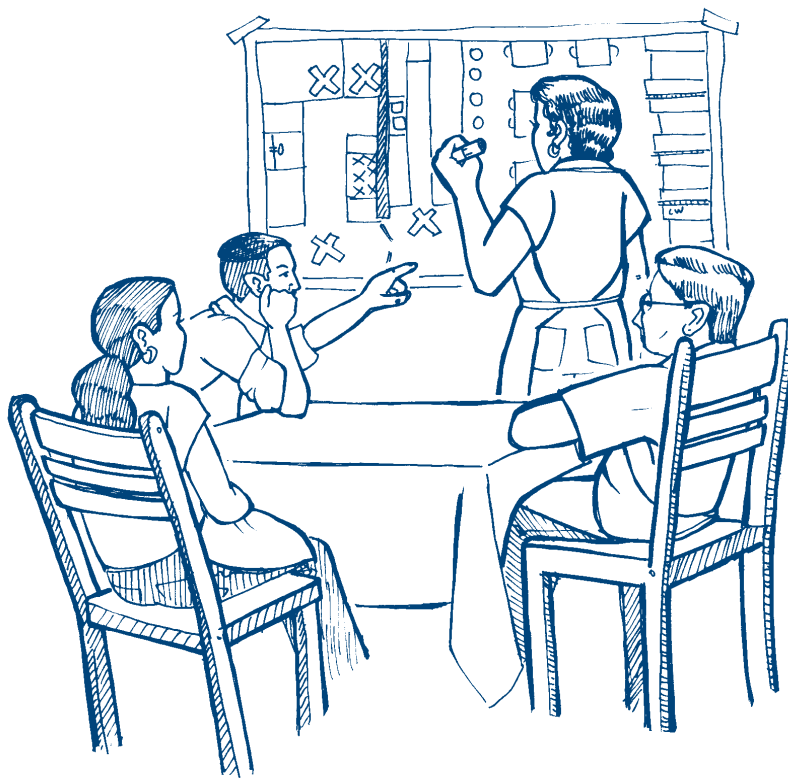
## HAZARD MAPPING

- Ask each participant to choose a partner.
- Pass out Handout #1, pens or pencils, and a red marker to each pair.
- Ask each pair to take about five minutes to go through the *Restaurant Hazards Checklist* (Handout #1) and use it to think about all the hazards in the restaurant.
- Once they have done this, ask them to decide which three specific hazards they are most concerned about, and circle them on Handout #1.
- Once everyone has completed this task, bring the group back together.
- On a piece of flipchart paper, draw a simple floor plan of your restaurant. You can also ask for a volunteer to do this. Ask the group to help make sure that all the key areas or pieces of equipment are included.
- Then ask each pair to mark on the floor plan where the three hazards they are most concerned about are located. They could draw a large dot or “x”, or label each hazard. Explain that it is OK to have more than one mark in the same location. If there is a hazard, such as stress or lifting, that cannot easily be marked in a particular place, they can write it on the side of the map or explain it during the wrap-up section of this activity.



## WRAP UP

- On a piece of flipchart paper, write a list of key hazards the group has identified. Start with areas on the map or in the walk-through that have the most marks or Post-its. Ask participants to explain what they've marked. Note the number of "votes" each hazard received. Add anything to the list that you think is important. Your list may look something like this:
  - grill (3)
  - slippery floors (kitchen) (3)
  - coffee maker (2)
  - slicer (2)
  - lifting (dish station) (1)
- Explain that the group will discuss these hazards and possible solutions at the next meeting.
- Save the list of hazards on the flipchart, and the hazard map (if you did that activity), for Meeting #2.



## Meeting #2: Controlling Hazards (30 minutes)

### INTRODUCTION

- Post the list of hazards from Meeting #1 (and the hazard map, if you did that activity).
- Ask participants to sit with their partners from Meeting #1. Make sure each pair has the worksheet (Handout #1) they filled out together.
- Pass out Handout #2, *Making Restaurants Safer*.
- Have participants look at Handout #2. Explain the concepts in the handout, or ask a volunteer to read Handout #2 aloud. In the section “Ask the Group,” stop and ask everyone for ideas to answer the questions. Make sure the group understands that it is important to think in terms of new systems or new ways of doing things so that hazards are eliminated or reduced. For example, find ways to actually prevent water or grease from getting on the floor, by using splash guards, or warning others when you’re moving pots with liquids. This is more effective than just telling people to “be careful.”

### WORKING TO ADDRESS HAZARDS

- Pass out the seven “Tip Sheets.” Point out that five of the tip sheets have ideas for dealing with specific hazards (burn hazards, cutting hazards, falling hazards, ergonomic hazards, and workplace violence). The other two tip sheets outline how workers should be trained to deal with injuries and other emergencies. If emergency preparedness needs to be addressed in your workplace, one pair can work on this issue in the next activity.
- Help each pair choose one hazard to work on from the list developed during Meeting #1. Try to make sure that at least one hazard is selected from each of the five types of hazards covered by the Tip Sheets if these are all important in your restaurant. Focus on the hazards that received the most “votes.”
- Pass out Handout #3. Ask each pair to work together to think about how to fill in Handout #3 for the hazard they chose. Have them start by thinking about things that are already done in your restaurant to protect workers from that hazard. This is an opportunity for employees to learn from each other. Then they should try to think of solutions that could **remove the hazard** from your restaurant or **change the way the job is done**. That may not be possible in every case. They should look at the appropriate Tip Sheet for ideas. Finally, ask them to come up with one or two concrete things that either staff or management could do to make that solution happen in your restaurant. Give them about five minutes to work. If there is extra time they can work on another hazard.

## DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

- Tape a large piece of flipchart paper to a wall. Divide the paper into four columns. Write: **Hazard**, **Solutions in Place**, **Solutions Needed**, and **First Steps** in the four columns. See the example below.
- Ask each pair to report how they would fill in the chart for the hazard they chose.
- Record what they say in the first three columns. Here is a sample.

Hazard	Solutions in Place	Solutions Needed	First Steps
Emptying deep fryer grease pans.	Rules about when and how to dump grease.  Oven mitts.	Use grease pans that empty automatically, rather than having employees manually dump grease.	Employer needs to buy and install automatic-dump grease pans.

- The completed chart should be your action plan for a safer workplace!
- Ask each participant to describe one new thing they learned from this training program.
- Tell everybody at least one new thing that **you** (as the instructor) learned and one thing that management will do to make the workplace safer, based on the work you did together.

### SUPERVISOR'S SAFETY TIP

A good way to share information with your staff about safety changes you make is by setting up routine safety meetings. These meetings can also be a place to discuss hazards that weren't covered in this training and come up with ideas for solutions.

# Restaurant Hazards Checklist

1. Check all the hazards below that you believe you have in your restaurant. This checklist doesn't cover every hazard, but will help you think about the most common ones. Use the blank lines to add any hazards that you think are important but are not listed.
2. Decide which **three** you think are the most serious hazards. Circle them.

## Hot Stuff

- |   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ovens and broilers | <input type="checkbox"/> Grills and stovetops | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep fryers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Microwave ovens    | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee makers        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____       |

## Sharp Stuff

- |                                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knives       | <input type="checkbox"/> Power slicers / grinders | <input type="checkbox"/> Food processors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broken glass | <input type="checkbox"/> Box cutters / tools      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____           |

## Slips and Falls

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slippery floors | <input type="checkbox"/> Clutter on floors        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cluttered exits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cords           | <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing to reach things | <input type="checkbox"/> _____           |

## Ergonomic Hazards

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awkward lifting      | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy lifting             | <input type="checkbox"/> Awkward bending or reaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repetitive movements | <input type="checkbox"/> Standing for long periods | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                       |

## Robberies and Assaults

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working alone               | <input type="checkbox"/> Working late at night | <input type="checkbox"/> Handling large amounts of cash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor visibility from street | <input type="checkbox"/> No alarm system       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                          |

## Chemicals

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dishwashing products | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning products | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____                |  |                                     |

## Other Hazards

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|

# Making Restaurants Safer

Many hazards exist in restaurants, but there are also steps that can be taken to improve safety dramatically. As the safety triangle shows there are three main ways to protect workers:

The best way to prevent injuries is to remove the hazard altogether (#1), or keep it isolated, away from workers, so it can't hurt anyone. This way the workplace itself is safer!

Removing the hazard can sometimes be the most difficult solution, or take the longest time to implement. You may need other solutions to protect you in the meantime.



## EXAMPLE

Many restaurant workers get burned lowering frozen food into deep fryers, or cleaning the fryers. What controls can a restaurant put in place to keep workers from getting burned?

Ask the group:

### 1. Is there a way to remove the hazard?

Install grease pans that dump automatically for cleaning.

### 2. What improvement in work practices would help?

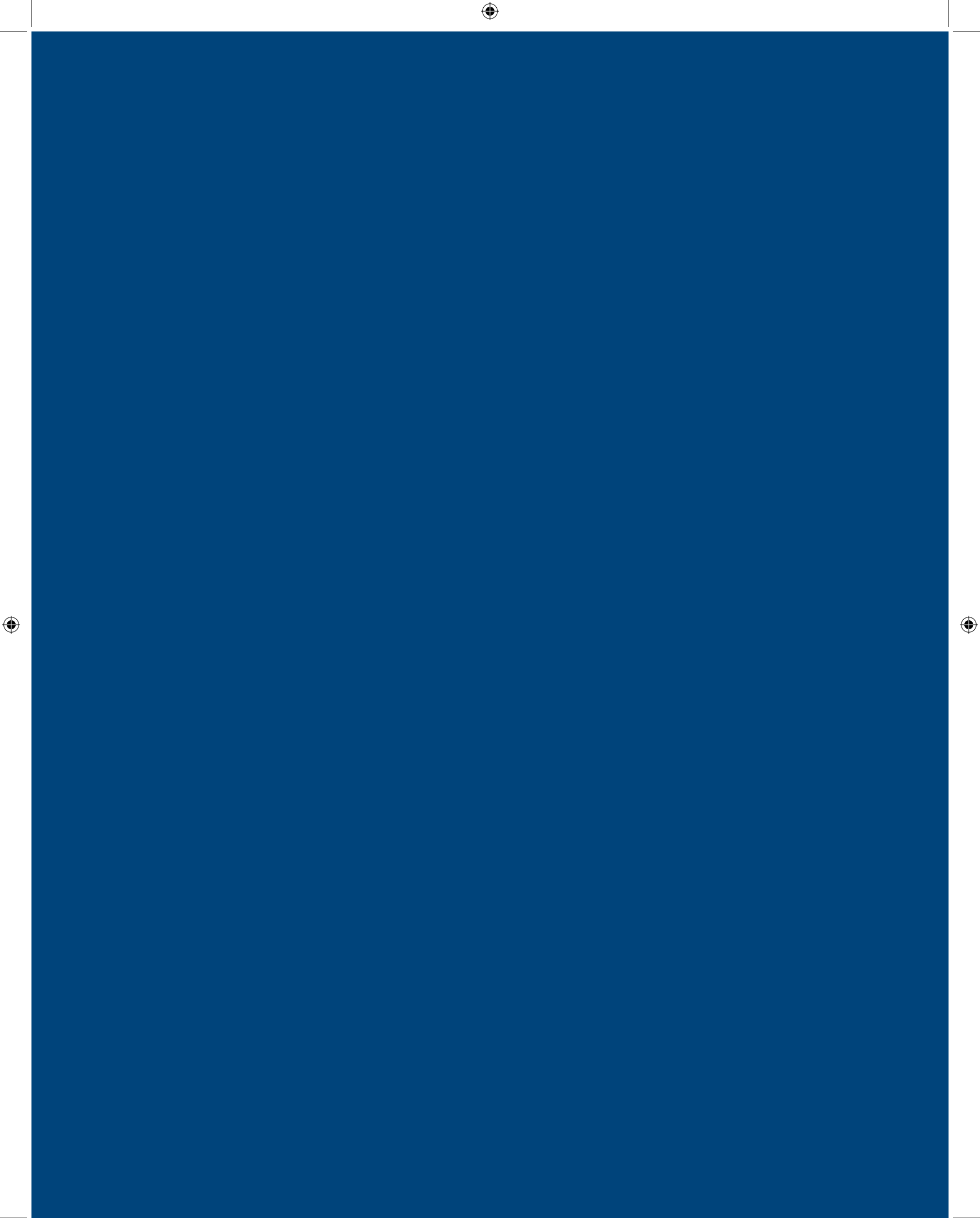
Train workers on the importance of shaking ice crystals off frozen foods before putting them into the deep fryer, to avoid splattering.

### 3. What protective clothing or equipment would help?

Gloves, sleevelets, and long aprons. These need to resist heat and grease to at least 400° F for anyone working with fryers.

# Hazard Identification and Control Worksheet

Hazard	Solutions Already in Place	Solutions Needed	First Steps
	Remove the Hazard:		
	Work Practices:		
	Protective Clothing/ Equipment:		
	Remove the Hazard:		
	Work Practices:		
	Protective Clothing/ Equipment:		
	Remove the Hazard:		
	Work Practices:		
	Protective Clothing/ Equipment:		



Labor Occupational Health Program  
University of California, Berkeley  
2223 Fulton St., 4th Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94720-5120  
(510) 642-5507  
[www.lohp.org](http://www.lohp.org)