



## Fire Hazards in Kitchen Extract Systems

70% of Fires in Commercial Kitchens Originate in Faulty Ventilation due to Fat & Grease Build up.

This information will help you comply with the Fire Safety requirements detailed in:

### THE REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2005

#### Introduction:

With the introduction in October 2006 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 there is a requirement that upon occupation the responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed for the purpose of identifying general fire precautions in the majority of workplaces.

#### Fire Risk Assessment:

Employing 5 or more people or requiring a licence (e.g. under the Licensing Act 2003) places a requirement to record the significant findings of the assessment

The risk assessment should provide information on mitigating fire risks, the provision of fire fighting equipment, fire alarms and detection, emergency lighting, emergency routes and exits and any maintenance schedules required to ensure that the facilities, equipment and devices provided are in working order and good repair.

In respect of premises that have a commercial kitchen, and in particular those requiring extract systems there is a significant risk of fire if ductwork and extraction units are not cleaned and serviced regularly.

#### Maintenance of Extract Ventilation Systems:

**Fire Hazards in grease extract systems are common** and major fires can occur which can have a devastating effect on business. There is a legal duty to prevent such a fire occurring.

The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations** along with the above **Fire Safety Regulations** place a very strict 'duty of care' on the manager of the premises. Part of the regulations stipulates that grease extract systems must be assessed for fire hazards and Extractor fan cleaning is a legal requirement.

**The Responsible Person must carry out regular cleaning of extraction units and associated ductwork planned around the level of use:**

**Heavy use (12 – 16 hours per day)**  
Clean every 3 months.

**Moderate use (6 – 12 hours per day)**  
Clean every 6 months.

**Light use (2 – 6 hours per day)**  
Clean every 12 months.

Extract hoods and filters should be cleaned and degreased daily or in accordance with manufacturers recommendations.

## Identifying Potential Hazards:

It is often extremely difficult to assess the extent of deposit build up on the internal surfaces of a grease extract ductwork system, owing to access limitations. However, a number of simple ways do exist whereby the existence of a potential fire hazard can be established.

- In order to enable an extract ductwork system to be fully cleaned, access doors must be installed within the system at a minimum of 3m intervals.
- If access panels have been installed it should be possible to review the internal condition of the ductwork system by the removal of one or more of the access panels.
- If access panels have not been installed it is very likely that it has never been cleaned and with the build up of grease there is the potential for a fire to occur.
- If there is evidence of grease deposits on the canopy filters - or running through the filters into the ventilation canopy – it is likely that the system contains potentially fire hazardous grease deposits.
- If there is evidence of grease deposits on the outside of the discharge grill, it is likely that the system contains potential fire hazardous grease deposits
- Certificates of cleaning may be issued by less reputable contractors when only a partial clean has been undertaken and fire hazardous grease deposits have not been fully removed.

If your extract system has not been cleaned and there is evidence of grease deposits within the system, you may also be failing to comply with the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. It is recommended that the system is professionally cleaned on a regular basis. Further advice regarding the legal requirements can be obtained from your local Environmental Health Department.

Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is committed to working together with our local business communities. Your business may be audited by a Fire Safety Officer who will make an appointment well in advance & discuss with you, the content of your fire risk assessment.

Our aim is to help you to ensure that your employees & premises are adequately protected from fire.

We want to achieve this through the use of your Fire Risk Assessment & premises audit. Any enforcement will always be proportionate & appropriate to the risk. Co-operation & collaboration is the key to a successful audit inspection.

Further information can be obtained from the following sources:

Fire Risk Assessment: a suite of guides covering a range of premises types are free to download from [Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-risk-assessment-5-step-checklist)

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service website [www.bedsfire.gov.uk](http://www.bedsfire.gov.uk)

Alternatively contact a Fire Safety Officer: email [firesafetyadmin@bedsfire.gov.uk](mailto:firesafetyadmin@bedsfire.gov.uk)