

## Lubbock Fire Marshal's Office

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# Guidelines for Commercial Cooking Operations

This guideline contains instructions for the most common type of commercial cooking operations that deal with vegetable or animal oils and fats. If you are not sure of the classification of your commercial cooking operation, or if your operation includes any type of cooking equipment not referenced here (recirculating systems, solid fuel cooking operations, etc.) please contact the Fire Marshal's Office for more information regarding your specific commercial cooking operation. This document is just a guideline, for more detailed information regarding commercial cooking operations; refer to NFPA 96, Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations.

[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

## Operation

- The exhaust systems shall be operating with all grease filters properly seated and in place whenever cooking equipment is turned on.
- Grease filters must be installed so that there are no gaps along the edges or in-between the filters. All of the cooking vapors must pass through the grease filters.
- Exhaust fans must have a separate, external drain with a collection box for the excess grease to accumulate into. The box must be visible, easy to access and can't have a total volume greater than 1 gal.

## Inspection

### General

- All equipment used for or in conjunction with commercial cooking operations must be kept in working condition by performing regular inspections, cleanings, maintenance and repairs.
- It is the responsibility of the owner of the system to make sure that all inspections, tests, maintenance work and cleanings are being performed. The only exception is if the owner can provide in writing a document showing that this responsibility has been transferred to a management company, tenant, or other party.
- The entire exhaust system must be inspected for grease buildup by a properly trained person at a minimum every three months.
- All interior surfaces of the exhaust system must be accessible so that it can be inspected and cleaned.
- Records of all maintenance and repairs performed on the cooking equipment, hood system, grease ducts, exhaust fans, and fire-extinguishing equipment must be

kept on site by the owner of the system or their designee for at least three years.

- If you plan on moving any cooking equipment to another permanent location for remodeling or rearranging, you must contact a licensed company approved through the Texas Department of Insurance to evaluate the proposed changes before making any changes. This does not apply to situations where the equipment is being moved for cleaning and will be returned to its normal position.

### Fire Extinguishing

- Class K portable fire extinguishers have to be within 30' travel distance to commercial cooking equipment that involves vegetable or animal oils and fats.
- A sign indicating that the fixed fire extinguishing system must be activated prior to using the portable extinguisher must be posted near the Class K portable fire extinguisher. See NFPA 10, appendix A.5.5.5.3 for an example of the sign.
- Instructions for using the fire-extinguishing system's manual pull station must be posted in the kitchen where all employees can see it. All employees must be properly trained on how to use the pull station.
- The fixed fire-extinguishing system must be inspected and certified every six months and after activation. Maintenance and semi-annual inspections must be performed by a company and person who hold current licenses issued by the Texas Department of Insurance.
- When the fixed fire-extinguishing system is placed out of service for repairs, the owner of the system must submit the [Impaired System Notification](#) form to the Fire Marshal's Office. When all repairs have been made and the system is restored to full operating conditions, the Fire Marshal's Office must be notified again.
- The fixed fire-extinguishing system must be visually inspected monthly by the owner of the system. The person performing the monthly visual inspection does not need to hold any special certifications, but must be familiar with the fire-extinguishing system that they are responsible for. This monthly visual inspection must include, but is not limited to the following:
  - The extinguishing nozzles are properly positioned.
  - The pull stations are not blocked.

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- Tamper indicators and seals are intact.
  - A current inspection tag is in place.
  - Look for any signs of physical damage or conditions that may prevent the system from working properly.
  - Check that the pressure gauge (if applicable) is in the operable range, or verify that the visual indicator shows that the system is in-service/on.
  - Check that the nozzle blow-off caps are in place and undamaged.
  - Verify that the protected equipment/hazard has not been replaced, modified, or relocated.
- Monthly visual inspections of the fixed fire-extinguishing system must be documented. The person performing the inspection must initial and date the back of the inspection tag that is located above the manual pull station.
- If any deficiencies are found, immediate action must be taken to correct the problem.

## Cleaning

- All equipment, walls, floors and surfaces associated with commercial cooking operations must be cleaned at intervals necessary to prevent the accumulation of grease.
- Cleaning records must be maintained on site for at least three years. Equipment cleaning must be documented on the [Restaurant Equipment Cleaning Log](#).
- Equipment cleaning must be done by a properly trained and qualified person. At this time there are no certifications that regulate individuals or companies that clean commercial cooking equipment so it is the responsibility of the owner of the equipment to verify that the cleaning complies with the procedures outlined in NFPA 96 – Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations.
- Before starting the cleaning process, electrical equipment that could be activated accidentally must be locked out.
- The fixed fire-extinguishing system cannot be rendered inoperable during the cleaning process.
- Do not use flammable solvents or flammable cleaning aids.
- Do not use cleaning chemicals on any detection devices of the automatic extinguishing system including fusible links.
- Do not apply any powders or coatings of any type to the exhaust system after it is clean.
- After cleaning is completed all access panels shall be restored to their normal operational condition.
- When an access panel or door is removed for inspection or cleaning, a service tag or label pre-printed with the

- name of the company must be affixed near the opening giving the date of inspection or cleaning.
- When cleaning procedures are completed all utilities and system components must be returned to an operable state.
- The cleaning company must provide the owner of the system with a written report of the work performed that includes any areas that were inaccessible or not cleaned.
- The cooking equipment must be maintained and inspected at least annually by properly trained and qualified persons.

## References

-  2015 International Fire Code
-  NFPA 96 – Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations
-  NFPA 10 – Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers
-  NFPA 17A – Standard for Wet Chemical Fire Extinguishing Systems