

# Burn Injuries in Teen Restaurant Workers

## Oklahoma Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program

A total of 104 restaurant and food service workers were hospitalized in Oklahoma burn centers for work-related burn injuries from 1988 to 2006. Eighteen (17%) of these workers were under 20 years of age. One-third of the burns involved more than 10% total body surface area. Burns and scalds may occur while teens are working as fry cooks, preparing or serving hot foods or drinks, cleaning dishes, and even delivering.

- A 13-year-old female was helping at her parents' restaurant. She tripped, slipped, and spilled hot grease on her body. She was hospitalized for 15 days with third degree burns over 10% of her body.
- A 15-year-old male and a co-worker were handling a vat of hot grease. They did not coordinate the move well. Hot grease was splashed onto his face. He stayed in the hospital for two days.
- A 16-year-old female was working at a restaurant when hot water in a pan spilled onto her. She received partial thickness burns over 13% of her body and spent six days in the hospital.
- A 16-year-old male slipped on the floor and fell into a vat of hot oil while working at a fast food restaurant. He was treated in the hospital for three days.

The Oklahoma Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program collects statewide information on 19 occupational health conditions in order to develop and inform occupational injury and illness prevention programs. Oklahoma's occupational surveillance system is a research program of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

For detailed reports, please go to the Occupational Injuries section at:  
<http://ips.health.ok.gov>

- A 17-year-old female backed into a deep fryer and splashed hot grease down her backside. She was hospitalized for six days with partial thickness burns over 7% of her body.
- A 17-year-old male was carrying grease, slipped and fell, and poured hot grease on himself while cleaning at a fast food restaurant. He suffered burns over 25% of his body and was treated in the hospital for 20 days.
- A 19-year-old female spilled a pot of hot coffee on her arm and chest while working at a restaurant. She had burns over 13% of her body and spent 17 days in the hospital.
- A 19-year-old male was cooking french fries and sustained third degree burns. He was hospitalized for six days.



### Contact Information

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## SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Provide teen workers workplace safety and first aid trainings before beginning work.*
- *Ensure that teen workers perform age appropriate work tasks.*
- *Keep working surfaces and floors uncluttered, clean, and dry. Clean up spills immediately.*
- *Wear fitted clothes, an appropriate apron, and sturdy non-slip, waterproof shoes.*
- *Use dry, thick, well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when handling hot food.*
- *Report all identified hazards to a supervisor immediately.*