



# Fire safety for commercial kitchens

**As a restaurant, café or takeaway operator, you have a legal duty of care** under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to safeguard your staff, customers, and the public. Failing to do so can result in legal consequences, including fines or prosecution.



## **There are a number of actions you should take to improve safety and reduce fire risk:**

- Ensure a fire risk assessment is completed and regularly reviewed; this is a legal requirement.
- Install and maintain a fire alarm system, test this weekly and maintain in accordance with the British Standard 5839-1.
- Ensure suitable fire separation exists between commercial units, residential and common areas.
- Ensure all electrical equipment is tested, maintained and cleaned regularly and is protected from heat sources either by protective covers or by suitable placement.
- Kitchen ducting and any filters should be cleaned regularly to avoid a build-up of grease. Grease build up could ignite and cause smoke and fire to spread to other areas of the property and nearby premises.
- Ensure you have suitable fire safety equipment available for your premises, such as fire blankets and fire extinguishers – and that staff have had sufficient training in using these items.
- Ensure you have a suitable and sufficient emergency evacuation plan. This should be adequate for the premises, recorded, displayed and shared with all employees. Ensure emergency exits are kept clear and unlocked.

**Solid fuels, such as wood and charcoal, produce carbon monoxide when burned.**

Carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that has no smell or taste, inhaling it can lead to serious illness and, in severe cases, death.



## If you use solid fuels you should:

- Ensure that functioning carbon monoxide detectors are installed in all areas where solid fuel burning appliances are being used – i.e. pizza oven, charcoal grill etc. these can be interlinked to your ventilation system and would activate if unsafe levels of carbon monoxide are detected.
- Ensure that cooking appliances are placed on stable surfaces away from combustible materials.
- When shutting down solid fuel ovens, remove hot coals carefully and transfer them to a safe, non-combustible container. Place the container in a well-ventilated, external area away from combustible materials to allow the coals to cool completely.
- Store fuel, coal, wood etc. in a non-combustible container, in a cool, dry, ventilated space, away from heat, naked flames and ignition sources and not in or around cooking appliances.
- Use tools and gloves designed for handling hot coals to prevent burns or accidental fires.
- The kitchen ventilation systems should remain operational until the coals/wood are completely extinguished and cool. This reduces the risk of carbon monoxide buildup.
- A solid fuel oven requires its own dedicated canopy and ventilation system, separate from other appliances. The canopy and ductwork must be built to withstand the high temperatures from solid fuel combustion.
- There are lids and other types of equipment available that can be used on cooking appliances during the cooling of solid fuels, to reduce carbon monoxide production. They work by limiting the oxygen supply and therefore slowing the combustion process.
- Consider installing an automatic fire suppression system.
- Ensure your fire risk assessment is updated to include the safe handling, storage, and disposal of solid fuels and ensure this is reviewed regularly.
- Incorporate solid fuels into staff training and procedures for managing solid fuel equipment.

## **For more information on fire safety in commercial kitchens**

please scan the QR code below or visit:  
[london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-workplace/  
takeaways-cafes-and-restaurants/](https://london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-workplace/takeaways-cafes-and-restaurants/)





