



FLASH IN THE PAN:

What you can do to reduce the risk of food service kitchen fires

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Click a tab above, chapter title below or the arrows at the bottom.)

FLASH IN THE PAN: **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FOOD SERVICE KITCHEN FIRES**



INTRODUCTION

It could happen in any foodservice business.

It could happen in yours. An unmonitored flame, a short fuse or a dirty exhaust system and suddenly a flame ignites and your business is threatened by a full-fledged fire. You didn't think it could happen. And then it did.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reveals that **roughly 8,000 foodservice businesses report an incident of fire each year**, resulting in a total estimated damage cost of more than \$246 million averaging \$30,750 per foodservice fire.

By focusing on prevention, identifying your business's key risk areas, and taking steps to mitigate that risk, you can help prevent your business from becoming a part of this alarming statistic, or at the very least help prevent hefty fines when the fire inspector comes. The time to start implementing a fire prevention strategy is now because by the time you smell smoke, it's already too late.





SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING AREAS WHERE THE POTENTIAL FOR A FIRE IS GREATEST

The risk of fire ignition is often tied to one of four central risk areas: cooking equipment, electrical connections and malfunctions, exhaust systems or employee error. Let's look at each area more closely.

RISK 1

COMBUSTION INVOLVING COOKING EQUIPMENT

A busy cook's line could have 10-20 flame sources operating simultaneously, so it's not surprising that cooking equipment is cited as the leading cause of fires in foodservice businesses. **The NFPA estimates that 61 percent of all facility fires, and 38 percent of the related damage caused, can be tied to cooking equipment.**

Perhaps more surprising is that almost 43 percent of these fires began when the cooking material itself — commonly oil or a food product — ignited.



RISK 2

ELECTRICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A common culprit in home fires, **electrical complications are also the second most common cause of fire in foodservice businesses.** These fires are often sparked by combustible items (think oil, paper products and even flour, which is one of the most combustible items found in most kitchens) left near power sources or from frayed cords, oil-laden connections or a simple system failure or malfunction.

Electrical fires account for about 9 percent of all foodservice business fires and 21 percent of the direct property damage.



RISK 3

UNRESOLVED EXHAUST COMPLICATIONS

Cleanup and removal of greasy buildup from the cook surface and hood system may feel like a mundane daily responsibility, but when these tasks are ignored or done poorly, the remaining residue can be a substantial fire risk. Even with a fire suppression system, if the flame reaches the grease build-up, the fire will exponentially grow and could result in a total loss for your restaurant.

NFPA regulations require any foodservice business where cooking takes place to have its hoods cleaned on a regular schedule — depending on hours of operation and volume of business. **The results of a failure to do so are too drastic to ignore.**



RISK 4

HONEST MISTAKES AND EMPLOYEE NEGLIGENCE

Sometimes accidents happen and sometimes those accidents can lead to a costly fire. **Human error — whether errantly misplacing a hazardous material or simply not following safe restaurant protocol such as cleaning spaces associated with fire risk areas — causes 22 percent of all facility fires, according to the NFPA.** Proper training and automated support can reduce this risk, but ultimately it's crucial that employees make smart decisions and follow through on expectations.





SECTION 2: PREVENTING OIL FIRES IN YOUR BUSINESS

We know that fire can originate from a number of sources, but do your employees? For managers, this means a fire prevention strategy must be comprehensive and focus on proper maintenance of the facility and training for staff.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



STAFF TRAINING

UPDATING YOUR STAFF TRAINING REGIMEN

Your staff should be well-versed in each of the following fire prevention safety techniques.

- **Cleaning up grease.** The hoods are paramount but staff should also look for grease on walls and kitchen equipment. This also includes avoiding throwing water on a grease fire. The problem will only get infinitely worse.
- **Handling and disposing of ashes.** Charcoal or wood ovens should be cleaned daily and ashes placed in metal containers. Cigarettes and ashtrays should be rinsed before being thrown away.
- **Ensuring solutions are properly stored.** From flammable liquids to cleaning chemicals, staff should know where to store such liquids and proper cleanup protocol should an accident occur.
- **Avoiding fire hazards.** Whether it's properly storing paper products or disposing of trash, soiled rags and cardboard in an effective manner, staff should understand and perform the daily maintenance tasks that reduce your fire risk.





ABOUT US

ABOUT RESTAURANT TECHNOLOGIES™

For more than 15 years Restaurant Technologies has been a leading provider of cooking-oil management and exhaust cleaning solutions helping more than 26,000 food service providers operate and grow their business. In addition to providing solutions that support financial and safety goals, Restaurant Technologies is also committed to helping providers grow their business by increasing efficiency, improving the guest experience and, of course, capitalizing on the latest trends. To find more industry news and information visit www.rti-inc.com. You can also follow Restaurant Technologies on [Twitter @RTIoil](https://twitter.com/RTIoil), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/restaurant-technologies) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/restauranttechnologies).

FOCUSING ON REDUCING YOUR FIRE RISK

You may think a serious fire will never occur in your business but can you afford to be wrong? A fire in your foodservice location does more than simply jeopardize your operation in the instant and during the cleanup, it puts your staff and guests at needless risk.

To protect your business from a catastrophic fire and costly downtime, Restaurant Technologies designed the AutoMist system. AutoMist automatically cleans your hood, flue and fan every day with a powerful spray mixture of detergent and water to prevent hazardous grease buildup. Don't delay – your business, your employees and your guests will be safer for it.

To learn how solutions from Restaurant Technologies can reduce your fire risk, contact us today at 1-888-796-4997 or www.rti-inc.com.



RISK 1

COMBUSTION INVOLVING COOKING EQUIPMENT

A busy cook's line could have 10-20 flame sources operating simultaneously, so it's not surprising that cooking equipment is cited as the leading cause of fires in foodservice businesses. **The NFPA estimates that 61 percent of all facility fires, and 38 percent of the related damage caused, can be tied to cooking equipment.**

Perhaps more surprising is that almost 43 percent of these fires began when the cooking material itself — commonly oil or a food product — ignited.

Deep fryers account for one third of all cooking equipment fires and range/cooktops about one fourth.



RISK 3

UNRESOLVED EXHAUST COMPLICATIONS

Cleanup and removal of greasy buildup from the cook surface and hood system may feel like a mundane daily responsibility, but when these tasks are ignored or done poorly, the remaining residue can be a substantial fire risk. Even with a fire suppression system, if the flame reaches the grease build-up, the fire will exponentially grow and could result in a total loss for your restaurant.



Though exhaust-related fires are rarer, they also account for the greatest share of property damage (69 percent).

NFPA regulations require any foodservice business where cooking takes place to have its hoods cleaned on a regular schedule — depending on hours of operation and volume of business. **The results of a failure to do so are too drastic to ignore.**

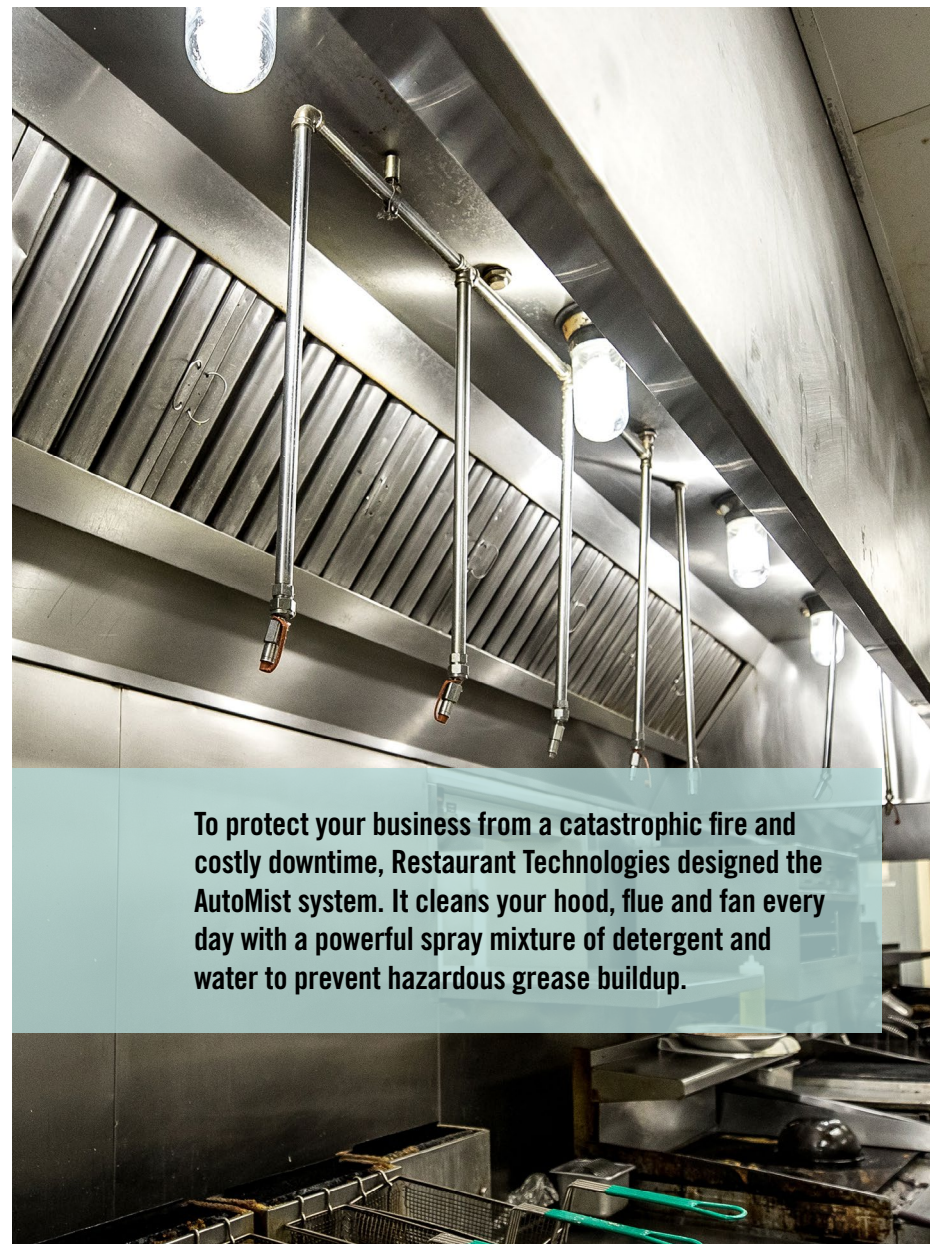


RISK 3

UNRESOLVED EXHAUST COMPLICATIONS

Cleanup and removal of greasy buildup from the cook surface and hood system may feel like a mundane daily responsibility, but when these tasks are ignored or done poorly, the remaining residue can be a substantial fire risk. Even with a fire suppression system, if the flame reaches the grease build-up, the fire will exponentially grow and could result in a total loss for your restaurant.

NFPA regulations require any foodservice business where cooking takes place to have its hoods cleaned on a regular schedule — depending on hours of operation and volume of business. **The results of a failure to do so are too drastic to ignore.**



To protect your business from a catastrophic fire and costly downtime, Restaurant Technologies designed the AutoMist system. It cleans your hood, flue and fan every day with a powerful spray mixture of detergent and water to prevent hazardous grease buildup.

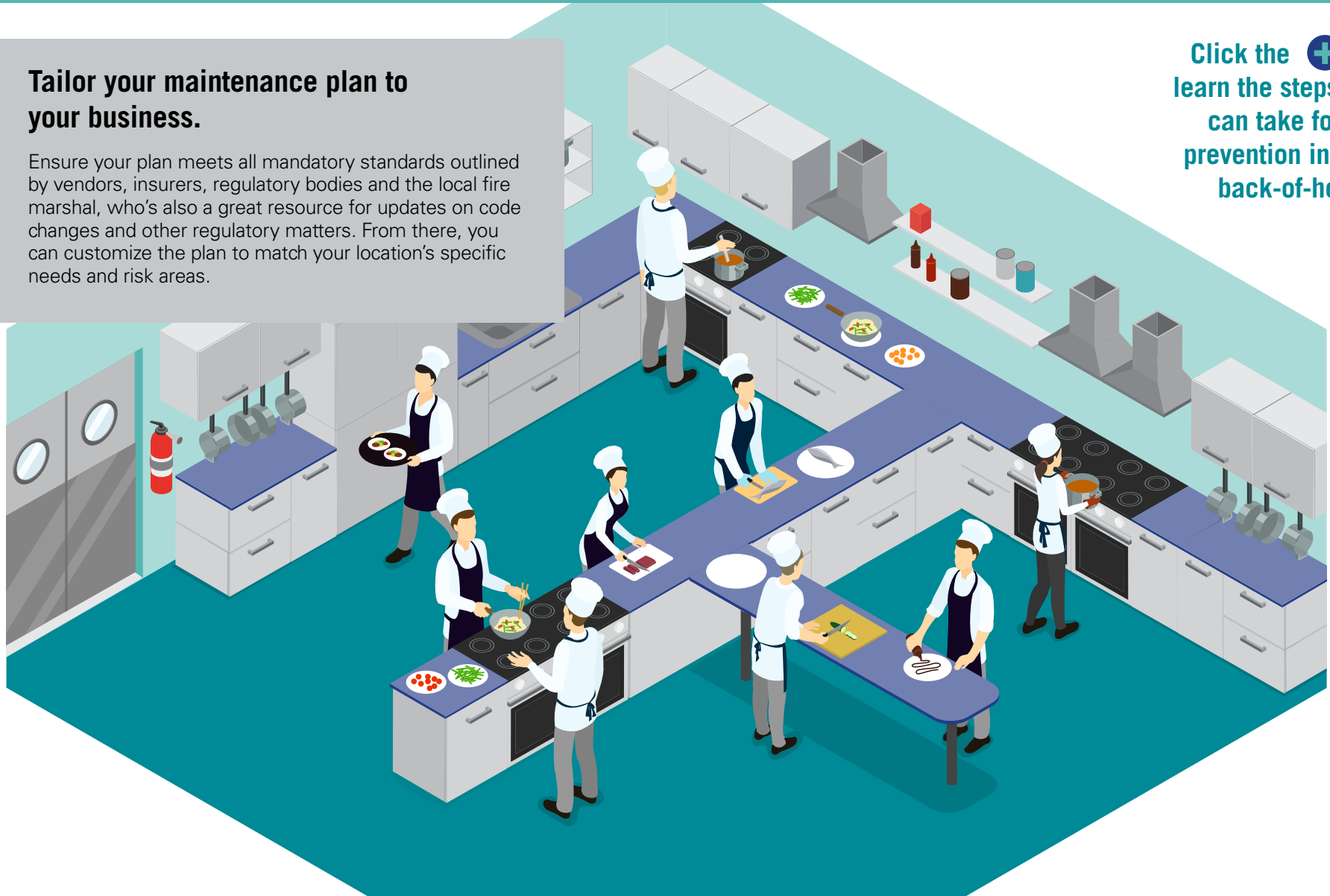
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Tailor your maintenance plan to your business.

Ensure your plan meets all mandatory standards outlined by vendors, insurers, regulatory bodies and the local fire marshal, who's also a great resource for updates on code changes and other regulatory matters. From there, you can customize the plan to match your location's specific needs and risk areas.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



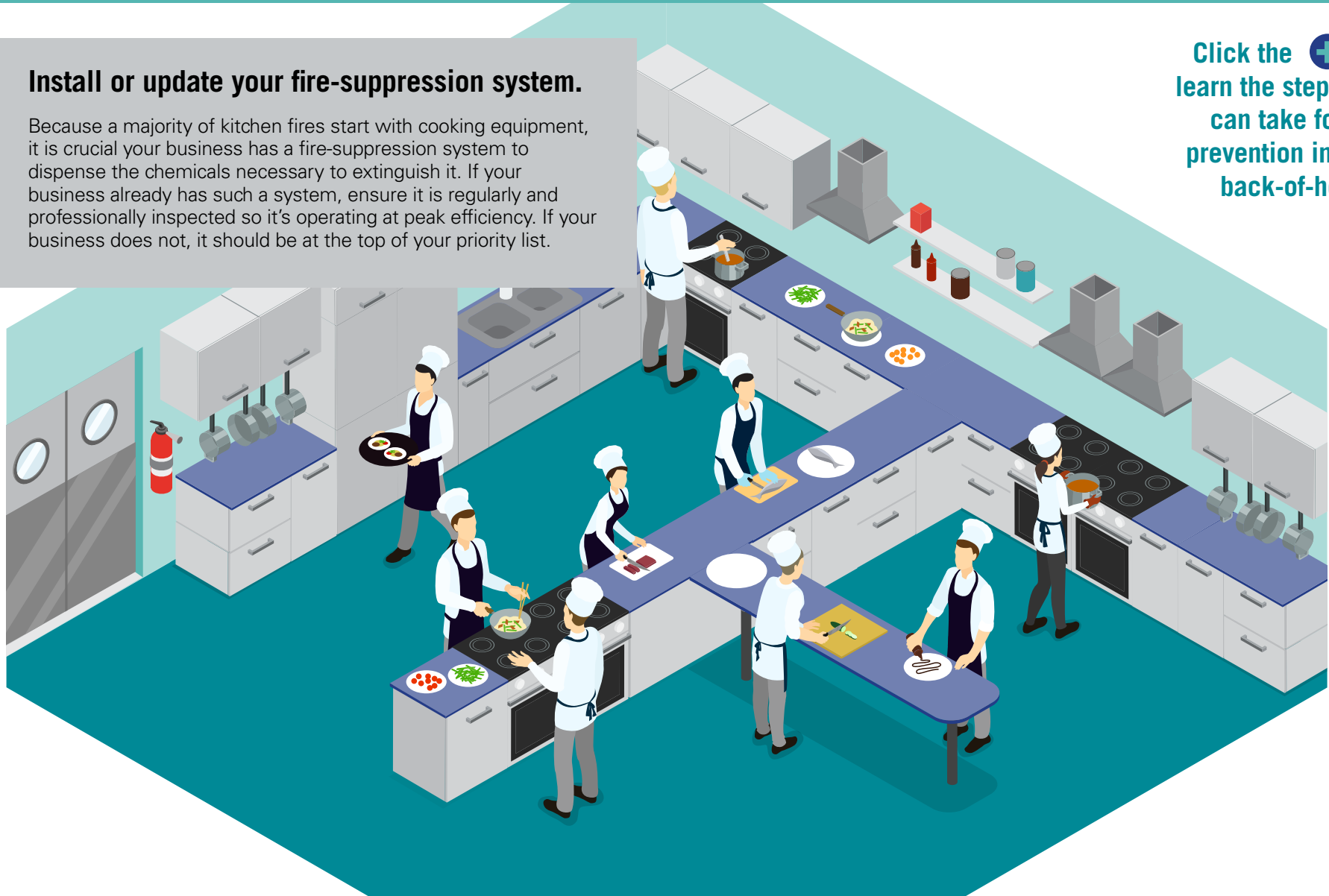
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Install or update your fire-suppression system.

Because a majority of kitchen fires start with cooking equipment, it is crucial your business has a fire-suppression system to dispense the chemicals necessary to extinguish it. If your business already has such a system, ensure it is regularly and professionally inspected so it's operating at peak efficiency. If your business does not, it should be at the top of your priority list.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



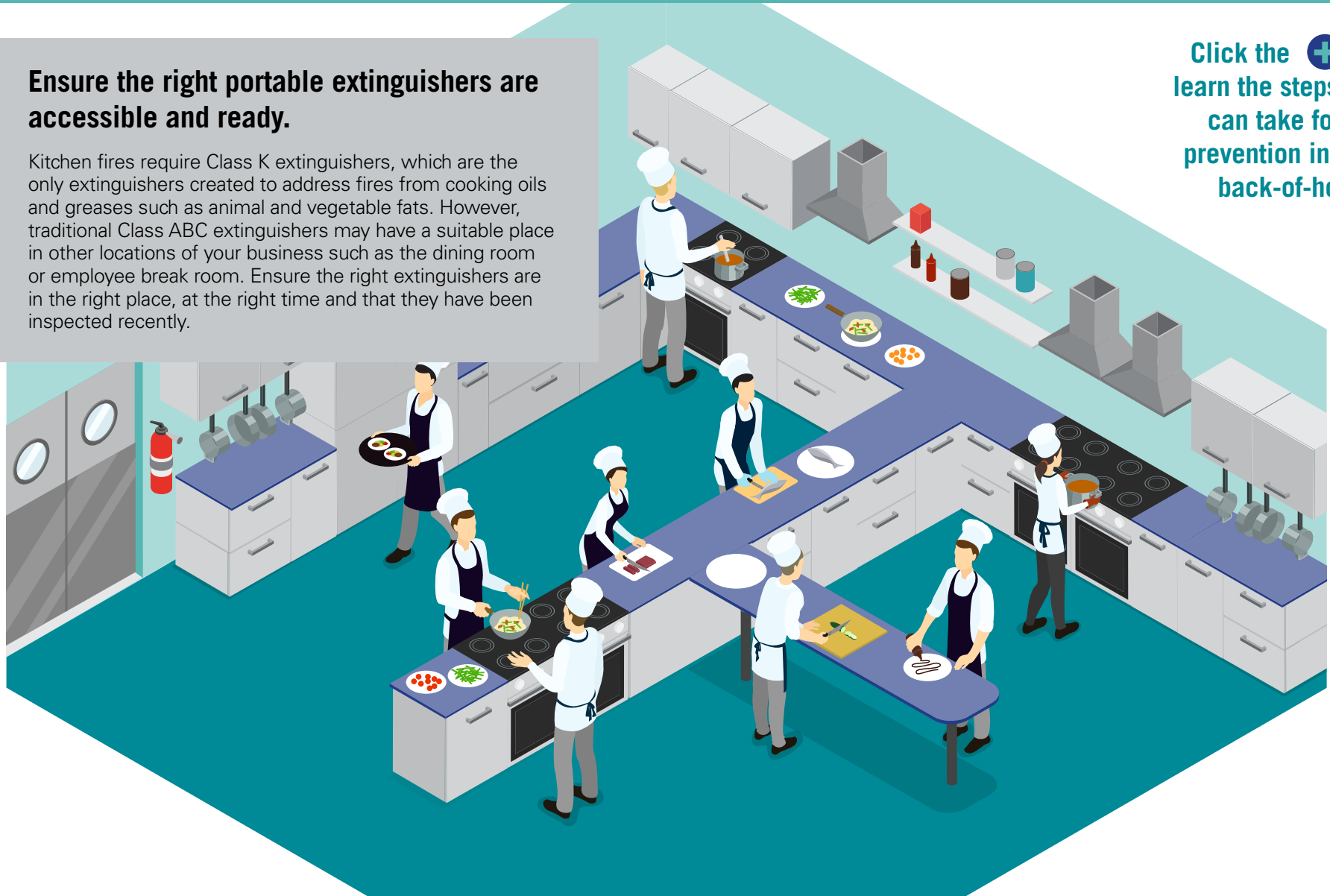
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Ensure the right portable extinguishers are accessible and ready.

Kitchen fires require Class K extinguishers, which are the only extinguishers created to address fires from cooking oils and greases such as animal and vegetable fats. However, traditional Class ABC extinguishers may have a suitable place in other locations of your business such as the dining room or employee break room. Ensure the right extinguishers are in the right place, at the right time and that they have been inspected recently.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



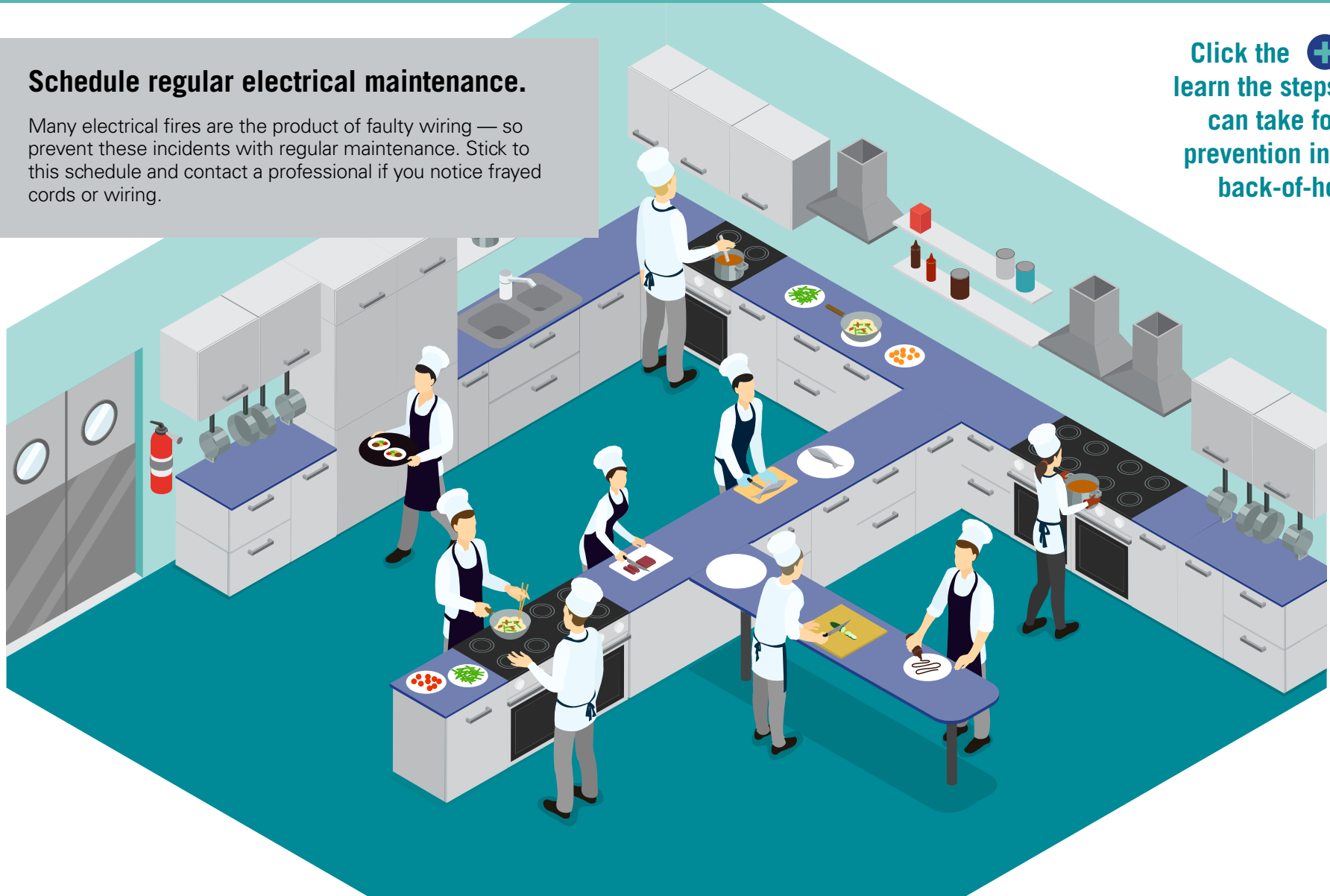
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Schedule regular electrical maintenance.

Many electrical fires are the product of faulty wiring — so prevent these incidents with regular maintenance. Stick to this schedule and contact a professional if you notice frayed cords or wiring.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



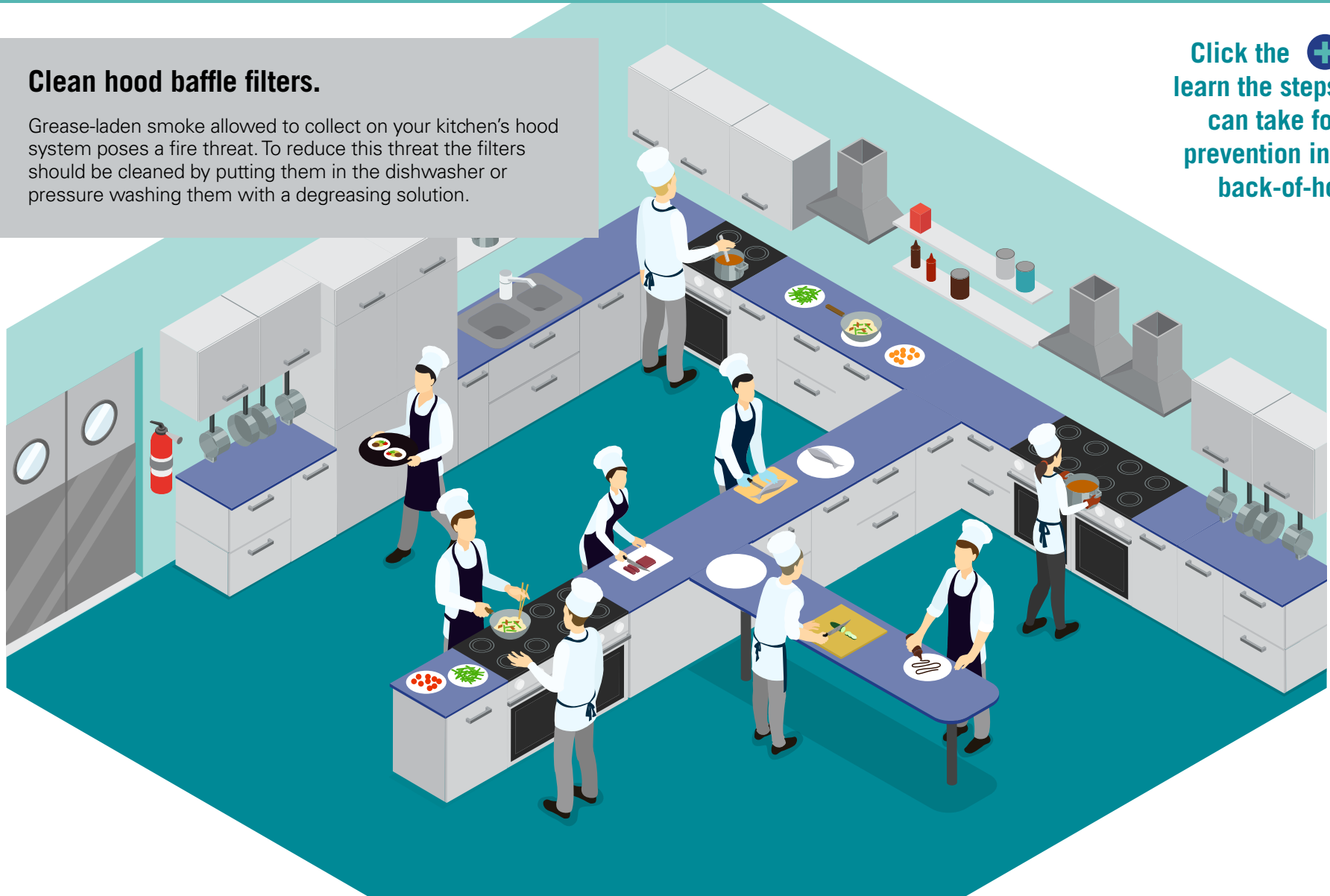
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Clean hood baffle filters.

Grease-laden smoke allowed to collect on your kitchen's hood system poses a fire threat. To reduce this threat the filters should be cleaned by putting them in the dishwasher or pressure washing them with a degreasing solution.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



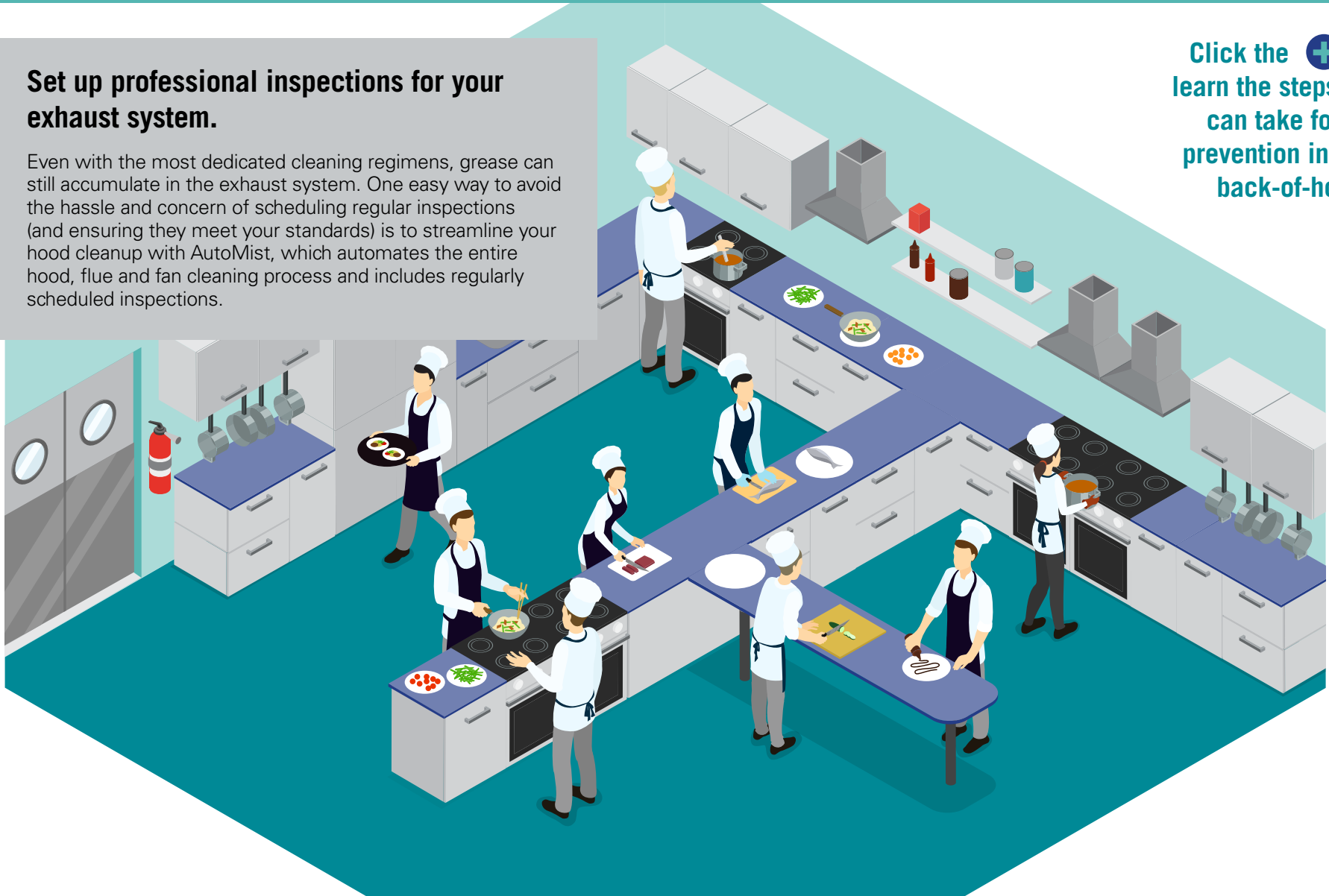
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Set up professional inspections for your exhaust system.

Even with the most dedicated cleaning regimens, grease can still accumulate in the exhaust system. One easy way to avoid the hassle and concern of scheduling regular inspections (and ensuring they meet your standards) is to streamline your hood cleanup with AutoMist, which automates the entire hood, flue and fan cleaning process and includes regularly scheduled inspections.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Review the inspection report carefully.

Request pictures to confirm the cleaning providers' efforts are meeting expectations.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.



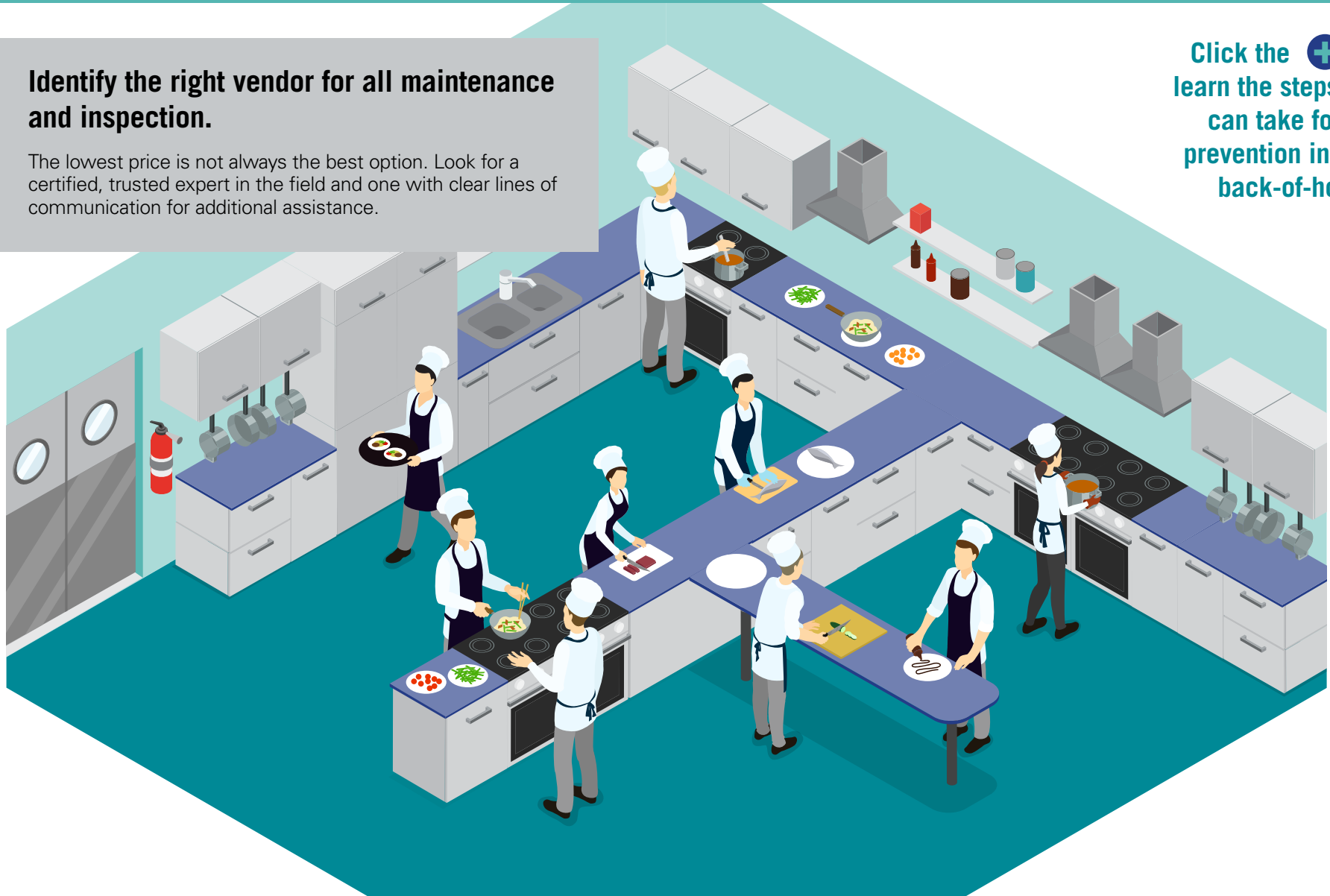
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST



Identify the right vendor for all maintenance and inspection.

The lowest price is not always the best option. Look for a certified, trusted expert in the field and one with clear lines of communication for additional assistance.

Click the  to learn the steps you can take for fire prevention in your back-of-house.

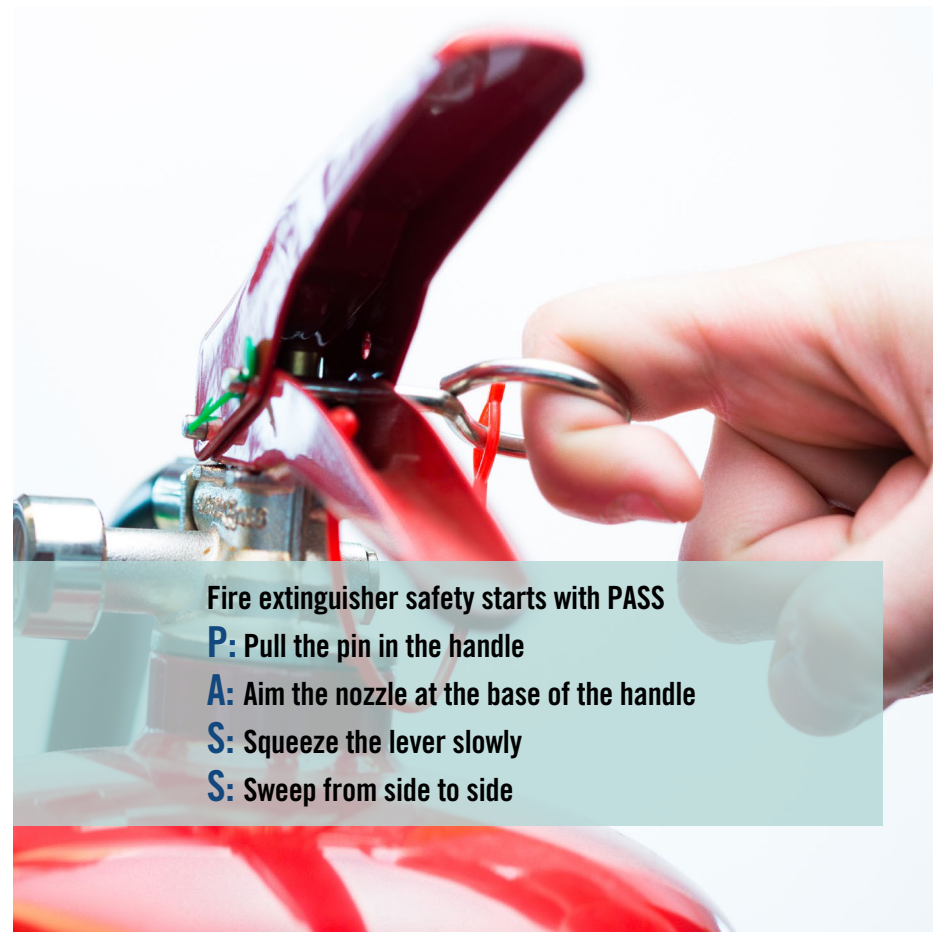


STAFF TRAINING

Your staff should be well-versed in each of the following fire prevention safety techniques.

- **Cleaning up grease.** The hoods are paramount but staff should also look for grease on walls and kitchen equipment. This also includes avoiding throwing water on a grease fire. The problem will only get infinitely worse.
- **Handling and disposing of ashes.** Charcoal or wood ovens should be cleaned daily and ashes placed in metal containers. Cigarettes and ashtrays should be rinsed before being thrown away.
- **Ensuring solutions are properly stored.** From flammable liquids to cleaning chemicals, staff should know where to store such liquids and proper cleanup protocol should an accident occur.
- **Avoiding fire hazards.** Whether it's properly storing paper products or disposing of trash, soiled rags and cardboard in an effective manner, staff should understand and perform the daily maintenance tasks that reduce your fire risk.

UPDATING YOUR STAFF TRAINING REGIMEN



Fire extinguisher safety starts with PASS

P: Pull the pin in the handle

A: Aim the nozzle at the base of the handle

S: Squeeze the lever slowly

S: Sweep from side to side