



Safety in Bakeries

Analysis of accidents in the bakery and flour confectionery industry has highlighted the following main types of risk and the preventative measures that may be taken to reduce them. They are by no means exhaustive and will vary depending on your own particular business. As a starting point use the blank sheet provided in this pack and carry out your own simple risk assessment.

Main Types of Risk

Managing the Risk

Slips, trips and falls

40% of major accidents are due to slips on wet floors or spillage of dough or other wet ingredients. Uneven and obstructed floor surfaces also lead to tripping accidents.

Many accidents occur when staff fall from a height, e.g. when loading/unloading vehicles, or when accessing stores.

- Provide slip resistant floor coverings.
- Introduce measures to avoid spillages and leakage, e.g. using secure storage bins or purchasing liquids in smaller containers.
- Ensure spillages are cleared up promptly and display warning signs when floors are wet or slippery.
- Keep production areas, stairs and passageways obstacle-free.
- Provide safety ladders or secure staircases to access goods at height.
- Train staff in their safe use. etc.

Manual Handling

Handling heavy loads such as bags of flour or trolleys and trays result in injuries of the back and muscles.

- Supply mechanical aids e.g. trolleys, lifts etc. where practicable.
- Train staff in proper lifting techniques.

Machinery

Bakeries contain many items of dangerous machinery where staff can come into contact with moving blades, conveyor belts and other traps leading to serious cutting and crushing injuries of the limbs. For example, dough brakes, pie and tart machines, mixers, roll plant and dividers.

- Site equipment on a secure base with adequate space around it. Ensure operators cannot be accidentally bumped/distracted.
- Maintain equipment in good condition.
- Ensure dangerous parts are adequately guarded, that interlocks are working and that machines can be readily isolated.
- Display warning notices to remind operators and others of the dangers involved.
- Provide training in safe systems of work during use and cleaning operations.

Hazardous Substances

Some chemicals used for cleaning can be harmful.

- Keep chemicals in original containers and train staff in their correct use.
- Provide protective equipment, e.g. gloves as necessary.

Burns and Scalds

Hot ingredients such as syrups can cause burns and scalds, as can other heated surfaces and objects, e.g. trays, ovens etc.

- Provide suitable oven gloves for handling trays etc.
- Devise safe systems for heating and handling hot liquids, e.g. avoid carrying about work area.

Health Problems

Flour dust exposure is a major problem in the bakery industry causing asthma and nose, throat and eye disorders. The handling of dough and other ingredients can cause dermatitis.

- Identify all sources of dust and control exposure where possible at all stages of production, e.g. minimal storage in production areas, adequate ventilation, enclosed mixing systems etc.
- Avoid dry brushing of floors etc. Use vacuum cleaners or wet cleaning methods.
- Provide suitable protective equipment, e.g. face masks/gloves where necessary.

■ For further information:

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The National Association of Master Bakers, (21 BladockStreet, Ware, Hertfordshire, SE12 9OH) and The Federation of Bakers, 20 Bedford Square, LONDON, WC13 3HF) also produce specific guidance for the bakery industry.