



Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning

Commercial kitchen exhaust systems are designed to remove heat and grease-laden vapors from the kitchen in a safe manner. When not properly maintained and cleaned, commercial kitchen exhaust systems may cause a fire.

Who Is Responsible For The Inspection/Cleaning of Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems?

The International Fire Code requires that restaurant owners to arrange for inspection/cleaning of the buildup of grease in their commercial kitchen exhaust systems at regular intervals. Commercial kitchen exhaust systems handling grease-laden vapors must also have a certified extinguishment system to protect the exhaust system.

NFPA 96 and the International Fire Code require the following areas to be free from combustible grease buildup at all times: exhaust filters; range hoods; appliances; backsplash; and the areas inside, behind, and under appliances. Restaurant owners are also responsible for maintaining air quality units, such as Electrostatic Precipitators, mounted on commercial kitchen exhaust systems.

Can I Inspect/Clean the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust System Beyond the Immediate Cooking Area Myself?

The restaurant owner may, and should, perform the following maintenance on a regular basis: clean the appliances, the floor behind the appliances, backsplash, the canopy of the

rangehood, and the required cleaning of the filters. The required inspection/cleaning of the commercial kitchen exhaust system, from the filters to the exhaust fan, *must be completed by a company holding the Fire Protection license approved by the Tacoma Fire Department.*

Who Inspects/Cleans the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust System Beyond the Immediate Cooking Area?

NFPA states that a trained and certified company or person shall do the inspections, cleaning and servicing of the commercial exhaust systems. The Tacoma Fire Department requires a regulatory Fire Protection License to perform this work.

The International Fire Code requires that written documentation and a cleaning sticker be provided on each range hood cleaned. The sticker shall show the date that the entire exhaust system was cleaned. This includes the area behind the filters, plenum, all portions of the horizontal and vertical ducts to the exterior of the building and the exhaust fan.

How Often Should A Commercial Exhaust System Be Inspected and Cleaned?

This inspection and cleaning must be completed at regular intervals as outlined in the International Fire Code and NFPA. For example, solid fuel cooking (wood burning) requires monthly professional inspection and cleaning of the area beyond the hood filters in addition to the regular cleaning performed by the owner.

Systems serving high volume cooking such as 24 hour cooking, charbroiling and wok cooking require quarterly inspection/cleaning.

Systems servicing moderate volumes (which is most) requires semi-annual inspection/cleaning.

Systems surviving low volumes such as churches, day camps and seasonal business require annual inspection/cleaning.

Commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning companies are required to report the following to the Tacoma Fire Department Confidence Test Officer within 30 days:

- when an inspection/cleaning is performed;
 - any safety issues observed;
 - improper cleaning occurring
 - any lapses in maintenance.
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