Burns and scalds are serious risks in the hospitality and tourism industry, and has accounted for the most frequently reported serious injury in this sector in the past three years.

Burns are injuries caused by heat (e.g. fire), electricity, chemicals, light, radiation or friction. The severity of burns is measured with four levels.

Scalds occur where burns are caused by hot liquids (like boiling water, steam, or oil heated for cooking). These are generally first or second degree burns.

Third-degree burns are often caused by scalding liquid, prolonged contact with a hot object, corrosive chemicals, and contact with fire or electricity. You may need skin grafts, surgery and intensive care to prevent infection.

Everyone in the industry should know how to prevent burns and how to administer first aid.

Hazards that could result in a burn need to be assessed and measures put in place to protect workers from risks. Workers need to be involved in the best ways to prevent burns.

And second or third degree burns should be assessed by a doctor or other qualified health practitioner.

SafeWork SA should be notified of an incident if a burn or scald needs critical or intensive care.

**How to minimise risks:**

- slippery floors increase the risk of a worker making contact with hot food, hot oil or hot objects like cooking pots. Floor surfaces and proper enclosed slip resistant footwear are important control measures.

- place warning signs or stickers near hot equipment or surfaces

- make sure cooking oil is cooled to a safe handling temperature prior to being drained from a deep fryer

- add a gravity-feed chute from the deep fryer to an external receptacle to eliminate the need to handle hot cooking oil waste

- use long handled baskets and automatic food-lowering devices for deep fryers

- cover equipment containing hot fat or fluids, when not in use

- use a tray or trolley to serve hot liquids, plates or utensils

- warn serving staff or customers if plates are hot

- make sure workers are trained in the use of espresso machines or deep frying food and follow safe working practices

- implement routine safety checks (for example, check that deep fryers and grills are turned off before closing time)

**Degrees of burns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First-degree burns</strong></td>
<td>(superficial burns) like mild sunburn affect only your outer layer of skin. Your burn site may be red, painful, dry, but generally has no blisters</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second-degree burns</strong></td>
<td>(partial thickness) that are often caused by scalds, flames or when you touch hot objects. Your burn site will appear red, blistered, wet and shiny, swollen and painful. These burns often appear white and are at risk of infection</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Third-degree burns</strong></td>
<td>(full thickness) where your outer, and inner layers of skin (that is the dermis) are destroyed. Third-degree burns may also damage your underlying bones, muscles, and tendons. The burned skin is stiff and white, black, yellow or brown, dry and leathery and painless because the nerve endings have been burned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tips and advice

For tips and advice on work health and safety, SafeWork SA offers a free workplace advisory service. An experienced WHS advisor can visit your workplace to help you to identify hazards and risks to put in place practical safety systems that will suit your specific circumstances.

Our advisors have no inspector powers at all under the WHS Act so you can feel comfortable inviting them in to help.

To request a visit go to safework.sa.gov.au/freeadvice or call 1300 365 255

- wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as heat resistant gloves and aprons
- use a waiter’s cloth to protect arms while carrying hot plates or trays
- take notice of warning signs regarding hot equipment
- train workers in preferred techniques for handling hot items such as
  - opening doors and lids of steam heated equipment away from the body
  - keeping saucepan or pot handles pointing away from the edge of a stove and make sure the handles are not over hotplates
  - using dry cloths to pick up hot items in order to avoid scalding
  - remove all utensils from pans
- install windows in the kitchen door to help prevent accidents involving workers carrying hot foods or beverages. Alternatively, provide entrance and exit doors
- redesign the kitchen so work areas are away from heat sources.