



Five Minutes to ***Fire Safety***

Topic: Hood Extinguishing Systems

Many schools have been moving towards healthier lunch fare and away from fried or greasy foods, potentially eliminating the need for fixed hood extinguishing systems. Other schools have explored using small fryers or other appliances in concession areas and had their requests revoked because there was no suppression system in place. When are suppression systems required and what can you do if your school has no need for what you currently have installed?

Whenever grease-laden vapors are being produced by cooking in something other than a personal residence, a hood suppression system is required. The 1991 edition of NFPA 96 states that "cooking equipment used in processes producing smoke or grease-laden vapors shall be equipped with an exhaust system..." consisting of a hood system, duct system, grease removal devices, and fire extinguishing equipment. Even if it's on a limited basis - such as fryers used for funnel cakes at a high school sporting event - a suppression system as described above is still required.

Who can install or maintain our hood suppression system?

The State Fire Marshal's Office licenses firms and individuals each year to service, recharge, install, or inspect fixed extinguishing systems, including those in kitchen hood systems. A list of firms and individuals can be obtained by contacting our office.

What if our kitchen does not produce grease-laden vapors?

First, remember that all fire protection systems currently in place - alarm systems, suppression systems, standpipes and hood systems - must be maintained, even if they are not required or used. If it appears functional, it must be functional and all required maintenance must continue to be done.

If you think that the system is no longer necessary, you might have the option of removing the system. To explore this option, contact your enforcement officer in the Topeka office.

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