

# Safety and health alert

## 05/05 Handling of hot liquids

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### Incident

In a restaurant kitchen, a young kitchen hand suffered severe burns from exposure to hot water.

A 16-year-old kitchen hand placed a large pot (containing approximately 20 litres of hot water) on an uneven surface in the washing up area of the kitchen. The pot had been used for cooking pasta and the water was still very hot. The pot of hot water toppled off the bench and splashed over a 17-year-old kitchen hand's leg and foot. This caused full thickness burns and permanent scarring to the right leg and foot of the 17-year-old, who will be wearing a pressure suit for approximately two years to assist with the healing of the burns.

The workplace procedures manual included procedures for the safe disposal of hot water, but the safe procedure was not followed in the workplace. There were three different work practices in use for the handling of hot liquids and a uniform approach was not being used to train employees in the safe system of work.

The owner was working in the restaurant most evenings but did not supervise the employees in the safe system of work for the disposal of hot liquids.

### Factors to consider

- Boiling water was not left to cool before being transported to the dishwashing area.
- A safe system of work was not implemented for the handling of hot liquids.
- Adequate instruction, training and supervision in safe systems of work were not provided for young persons in the workplace.

### Recommendations

1. Implement safe systems for handling and disposing of hot liquids.
2. Employees to be instructed, trained and supervised in the handling of hot liquids and the safe system of work.
3. Consider issues associated with moving containers of hot liquid for kitchen hands.

### Further information

Further information on this summary can be obtained from WorkSafe's Internet site at [www.safetyline.wa.gov.au](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au) or by contacting Inspector Angela Stanley on 9327 8777.

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