



Aerosol Cooking Oil Products Can Explode

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Canned aerosol products, a common sight in commercial kitchens and other food businesses, can overheat, explode and cause fires when safe use and storage precautions aren't followed.

The following descriptions of actual incidents in Washington State show what can happen:

- An aerosol can of cooking oil overheated and exploded, injuring a kitchen worker who was hospitalized for several days due to serious burns. The can, labeled "Caution: Flammable Spray," had been stored on a metal shelf about 21 inches above a hot griddle.
- A line cook was hospitalized two days due to serious burns after an aerosol can of cooking oil stored inside the rim of a range exhaust hood fell and ruptured as it struck a burner. The can's contents were released and ignited by a burner's pilot light.
- An aerosol can of cooking oil left on a rolling table next to an operating gas range overheated and ruptured, releasing flammable contents that ignited and created a fireball that burned two kitchen workers.



Hazardous! This aerosol can is stored too close to a heat source. Photo: L&I

To keep workers safe:

- Find out if you have canned aerosol products in the workplace. These products are hazardous because they are pressurized and contain flammable propellants like butane or propane. Look for "Flammable" warnings and safe-use labels on any aerosol product used at work. In addition to cooking products, some kitchens also use aerosol cleaning products that can rupture and ignite around heat sources. To learn more about identifying chemical hazards visit [Chemical Safety Basics](#).
- Provide safety training to kitchen workers as part of your required [Accident Prevention Program and safety orientation](#) so they know the hazards of pressurized flammable products and how to use them safely. Also, include these products in your [written Hazard Communication Program](#), when applicable.
- Don't allow cans to be stored near kitchen ranges or other heat sources. Designate [safe storage spaces](#) (e.g. on counters away from heat sources) and inform workers. Have workers apply cooking spray to pans or food at a safe distance away from heat and sources of ignition. Check the workplace periodically to ensure aerosol products are being stored and used safely.

To learn more about hazards to kitchen workers visit L&I's [Restaurant Industry Safety](#) resource page.

Share this bulletin with others in your industry and safety network.

*This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees to potential hazards associated with work activities. **This is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations.** The information provided includes suggested guidance on how to avoid workplace hazards and describes relevant mandatory safety and health rules. DOSH recommends you also check related rules for additional requirements.*

#1HeB2017