

# SERIOUS BURNS INCIDENTS – RESTAURANT, KITCHEN OPERATORS AND WORKERS BEWARE

## BACKGROUND

Recently, two incidents occurred in Sydney in the space of one week, where kitchen workers suffered serious burns after methylated spirits was mistakenly used near a heat source or flame. In both incidents workers unwittingly used containers thought to contain a different cleaning agent.

The purpose of this safety alert is to remind Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs) and workers of the need to correctly store and use hazardous chemicals in the workplace.

## ACTION REQUIRED

Work health and safety laws require PCBUs to eliminate risks from the use of hazardous chemicals or, where this is not possible, to control those risks as far as reasonably practicable.



Flame damage to a container of methylated spirits

## RISK CONTROLS

Where possible, use non-flammable water-based chemicals for cleaning.

Always follow instructions for safe use and handling found in safety data sheets that should be obtained from the chemical supplier. Information should also be available on the chemical container's label.

Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to workers on the safe use of hazardous chemicals in the workplace.

Store and use flammable chemicals away from ignition sources such as heat and flames.

When using flammable chemicals, make sure you have an appropriate fire extinguisher and fire blanket at the ready and make sure staff know how to use them.

Always store chemicals in their original container and, if the chemical is poured into another container (such as a spray bottle), make sure that the container is compatible with the chemical and that it is also clearly labelled.

Do not use food containers to hold hazardous chemicals.

---

### Further information

Call SafeWork NSW on 13 10 50  
Visit [safework.nsw.gov.au](http://safework.nsw.gov.au)

---

## LET'S TALK SAFETY

### Disclaimer

This publication may contain information about the regulation and enforcement of work health and safety in NSW. It may include some of your obligations under some of the legislation that SafeWork NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

This material may be displayed, printed and reproduced without amendment for personal, in-house or non-commercial use.

Catalogue No. SW08832  
SafeWork NSW, 92-100 Donnison Street,  
Gosford, NSW 2250  
Locked Bag 2906, Lisarow, NSW 2252  
Customer Experience 13 10 50  
Website [www.safework.nsw.gov.au](http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au)  
ISBN 978 1 74341 030 1  
© Copyright SafeWork NSW 0218