RESTAURANT NIGHTLY CLOSING CHECKLIST – PROPERTY PROTECTION

There are, on average, 7,410 structure fires each year in eating and drinking establishments, which result in more than $165 million in property loss. Twenty-eight percent of those fires occur between midnight and 6 a.m., when many restaurants may be closed. Ensuring that heat and fuel sources are properly secured prior to closing is an important part of reducing after-hours fires. Additionally, overflowing sinks, toilets, etc. can lead to substantial property damage, especially when the property is unoccupied.

This handout provides some nightly closing steps that may help reduce the potential for property loss.

GENERAL DINING AREA

- ☐ If smoking is allowed on the premises, empty ashtrays (and no other trash) into metal cans with lids and place outside.
- ☐ Extinguish candles with a snuffer (not by blowing), fireplace units, and similar ignition sources.
- ☐ Shut off steam tables, heating trays, and heat lamps, such as those used on buffet lines.
- ☐ Ensure tablecloths, drapes, and other combustibles are at least 18 in (46 cm) from heating ducts, baseboards, etc.
- ☐ Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.
- ☐ Turn off fans.

RESTROOMS

- ☐ Check restrooms for evidence of smoking.
- ☐ Remove trash and dispose of outside in a covered trash receptacle.
- ☐ Check toilets and sinks to ensure water is not running.
- ☐ Test smoke alarms (patrons often disable restroom smoke detectors to hide smoking).

KITCHEN

- ☐ After all cleaning is completed, verify dishwashers are shut down.
- ☐ Turn off faucets and check sinks for proper draining.
- ☐ Shut down all cooking equipment (e.g., grills, ovens, fryers), and remain on site until cooking surfaces cool.
- ☐ Check that freezer, refrigerator, and cooler lights are off and doors are secured.
- ☐ Check exhaust hoods for excessive grease and hidden fire and exhaust fans are shut off.
- ☐ Empty grease into a metal can with lid and remove from area.

PRIOR TO EXITING

- ☐ Verify all lights are switched off except those left on for security.
- ☐ Ensure alarm system is armed.
- ☐ Do an exterior survey to ensure combustibles are not piled next to the building.

Contact your Risk Engineering consultant or visit **TheHartford.com/riskengineering** for more information.

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