

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools



Subject: **SUSPECTED GAS SMELL IN FOOD SERVICE AREA**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all safety precautions are in place and followed if there is a suspected propane or natural gas smell in the food service area.

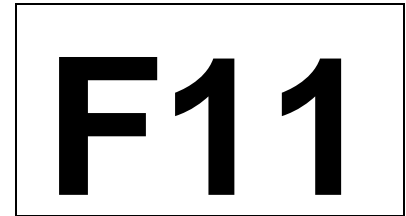
PROCEDURE

In the event that a smell suspected to be propane or natural gas is detected in the food service area, and it has been determined that the smell is not due to low propane levels in the tank, the following actions must be immediately initiated.

- Food service manager/satellite assistant or designee must immediately instruct all occupants in the kitchen and cafeteria area to evacuate the premises and go outdoors for fresh air away from the area if any of these circumstances exist:
 - It is difficult to breathe.
 - The smell is very strong and overpowering.
 - There is a loud sound of escaping gas such as a hissing or whistling noise.
- If none of the three circumstances described above are present, the Food service manager/satellite assistant or designee shall open doors and windows to allow the smell to dissipate. If there is any uncertainty about how severe the gas leak is, everyone should evacuate.
- Food service manager/satellite assistant or designee shall immediately inform the principal or designee so they can initiate appropriate actions. If a school administrator is not readily available, call 911 to report the situation and Miami-Dade Schools Police at 305-995-COPS (2677). Inform the call taker that the kitchen and cafeteria have been evacuated because a gas leak is suspected.
- Food service manager/satellite assistant or designee must notify the food service supervisor of the situation.
- The first responders must be made aware if anyone is experiencing symptoms of gas poisoning.
- The individuals involved in the incident are not to leave the campus until they are cleared by the Fire Department.
- Do not re-enter the premises until the emergency service responders have declared the facility safe.
- Do not initiate any cooking operation until emergency service responders and maintenance have declared it is safe to use cooking equipment and approval has been given by the Food and Nutrition supervisor/administration.

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Important Information

- Signs of propane or natural gas leaks include a strong “rotten egg” smell, hissing or whistling noise.
- Natural gas and propane are explosive. An accumulation of gas can destroy a building if it finds a source of ignition.
- The most common symptoms of inhaling propane or natural gas are dizziness, cough, nausea, vomiting, headache, skin irritation, fever, nervousness, irregular heartbeat, pain or numbness in the extremities, and weakness.
- The hood system is required to be ON and properly working before turning on and using any cooking equipment.
- If the hood system is not working properly, report the issue to the Department of Food and Nutrition. Do not initiate any cooking operation that requires the use of fuel burning equipment.

For Action By: Food Service Managers, Satellite Assistants

Refer Questions to: Department of Food and Nutrition

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