

Certification Protocol

This chapter provides guidelines for commercial kitchen exhaust cleaners (herein referred to as exhaust cleaners) and the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to establish a consistent and recordable set of Competencies for commercial kitchen exhaust cleaners. The chapter is also designed to help exhaust cleaning companies enhance their professionalism with all stakeholders.

In 1998, to improve commercial kitchen fire safety, NFPA 96 approved the proposal that restaurant exhaust systems be inspected and cleaned:

NFPA 96 11.6.1 Upon inspection, if found to be contaminated with deposits from grease-laden vapors, the contaminated portions of the exhaust system shall be cleaned by a properly trained, qualified, and certified company or person(s) acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

Since that time a growing number of States, Provinces and other jurisdictions are requiring exhaust systems certification as proof of competency to comply with code requirements.

Phil Ackland Company Qualifications (PA/CQ)¹ and Crew Leader Certification (PAC) herein referred to as PA/CQ and PAC, was created to provide guidelines for the restaurant industry, Authority Having Jurisdiction and exhaust cleaners to establish a consistent and measurable Standard of Care provided by these service companies and individuals. Thereby fulfilling the requirements of NFPA standards involving commercial exhaust cleaners.



PA/CQ and PAC provides practical definitions of what trained, qualified and certified measurement should be when a company or person is seeking to meet the benchmark of ".....acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction."

All of which will answer questions for fire experts and other inspectors on fire safety in kitchens and reduces kitchen fires.

¹ The name Phil Ackland Company Qualifications and Phil Ackland Certification are meant to be only temporary names until the Protocol is adopted by the appropriate "governing" jurisdictions.

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

Definitions

Trained. A person who has become proficient in performing a skill reliably and safely through instruction and practice/field experience acceptable to the AHJ. Formal and/or technical training can be administered by the employer or a recognized training program.

Qualified. A competent and capable person or company having the necessary equipment for cleaning and that has met the requirements and training benchmarks acceptable to the AHJ.

Certified. A formally stated recognition and approval of an acceptable level of competency, acceptable to the AHJ.

Certified. Certification can be provided by the manufacturer of the listed equipment being serviced or an independent third party acceptable to the AHJ.

The nature of exhaust cleaning is that nearly all training of workers takes place in the on-the-job environment². Therefore, the “Training” aspect comes from the employer (as opposed to the manufacturers in other related industries). As the responsible party, it is the employer who evaluates it’s employees, making the decision to elevate an individual to the position of “Crew Leader”.

Preamble

The removal of combustible deposits from commercial kitchen exhaust systems reduces the risk of fire.

This Protocol and other educational information is provided at **no charge** to the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Our Goal is to provide the technical guidance to the AHJ, which will assist them in making an informed judgment regarding qualification of the exhaust cleaners. Provide information to fire inspectors and fire investigators on fire protection and code compliance in commercial kitchens.

Kitchen exhaust cleaning, also known as vent hood cleaning or kitchen hood and duct cleaning, is preformed with a pressure washer, also known as a power washer. The work of kitchen hood cleaning is done during off-hours when the kitchen is not operating.

Hood cleaners need to know the NFPA and IMC fire codes relating to commercial kitchens hoods. In this way, the kitchen cleaner can inform the restaurant exhaust hood owner of serious deficiencies as they relate to the cleaning of the exhaust system.

² There are private schools that train exhaust cleaners, contact the author for further details.

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

All of which will increase kitchen fire safety.

Purpose

PA/CQ and PAC provides a consistent set of minimum measurements and qualifications for those who inspect and clean commercial exhaust systems.

The primary goals of PA/CQ and PAC are:

- Qualify the Company (legal entity doing business)
- Train and Certify the Crew Leader (that individual who is on the job site at the time of the cleaning, who is responsible for the companies actions)
- Ensure that a Crew Leader has a ~~minimum~~ level of training (recommend 100 hours³) and has an understanding of the fire and mechanical codes related to cleaning of commercial kitchen systems.
- Elevate professionalism of persons and companies performing exhaust system cleaning in general

The establishment of a Standard of Care for acceptable practices will provide end users, AHJ's, insurance agencies, etc a benchmark to judge whether the performance (service) of a cleaning company or individual meets the requirements as per the code.

Certification Details

The following details provide guidance on certifying kitchen hood and duct cleaning contractors. Ensuring that these kitchen exhaust cleaners fulfill the necessary steps to gain certification.

PA/CQ and PAC is a two step process

1. Qualification of the hood cleaning Company (the PA/CQ portion)
2. Training and Certification of hood and duct cleaning Crew Leaders (achieving the PAC portion)

Company "Qualification" Steps

³ Hourly values subject to change.

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

Assign a Company Rep. The kitchen hood cleaning company rep is defined as the person (Owner, Supervisor or Manager) who:

- Provides the required information on behalf of the company
- Takes responsibility for the actions of the company and the Crew Leader
- Decides that a person (Crew Leader) is ready to take Phil Ackland Training

Company Qualification Application

The Company Rep will fill out and sign the "*Company Qualification Application*" form

The kitchen exhaust cleaning company ~~must~~ provide:

- Liability insurance coverage \$1,000,000
- A Federal ID Number
- The Rep signs *The Pledge* for the Company (See that portion on the *Qualification Application*).
- A copy of their written After Service Follow-up reporting format with which they will communicate (but not limited to) the following with customer:
 - Any areas the kitchen system not cleaned (with reasons why)
 - Areas that may need access for cleaning and inspection of the hood, duct and fan
 - Any serious visible deficiencies with the exhaust system within the knowledge of an exhaust cleaner⁴

Once we receive the complete Company Qualification Application and necessary attached material, we assign the company a "Company Qualification Serial Number."

Crew Leader Training and Certification

When the Company Rep deems a kitchen exhaust hood and duct Crew Leader ready to begin the process of PAC training; the Company Rep will submit the *Crew Leader Application Form*.

Crew Leader is defined as the individual on the job site at the time of cleaning who is Certified and responsible for the satisfactory completion of the cleaning (to NFPA 96 and other accepted Standards of Practice) and the safety of the public.

The "Training" consists of:

- Studying the Cleaning and Certification Manual (4th edition) and related videos
- Completing a Workbook (80% accuracy required for a passing grade)

⁴ Values may change

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

After successful completion of the Workbook and all other documentation have been provided the Crew Leader will take the Final Exam. (80% accuracy required)

With successful completion of the Test they will be issued a "Certificate."

The Certificate will have the Crew Leader's name and the Name of the Qualified Company. It will also have a date of expiry and Serial Number.

The actual "Certificate" is provided to the Company Rep. in the name of the Crew Leader for their files.

A Crew Leader is only "Certified" to his "Qualified" company.

Owner/Operator's of a small-business can act as both their own Company Rep and be a Crew Leader.

The Company Rep does not have to be "Certified." Meaning they may not be a Crew Leader.

If the Crew Leader goes to another company; that company will have to fulfill all the requirements of the PA/CQ Company Qualification Application before the Crew Leader will be consider PAC.

The Crew Leader will not have to redo the Workbook or Test.

The expiry date of his certification will remain the same.

We only "Certify" Crew Leaders from "Qualified" Companies. Just because a company is "Qualified" does not mean that any of their Crew Leaders are Certified.

The process of PA/CQ and PAC can be accomplished by correspondence or attending an authorized training course.

Companies that advertise that they are "Phil Ackland Certified" **will be in error**, as we **will not** certify companies. We have two different Logos "*Phil Ackland Qualified Company*" (PA/CQ) and "*Phil Ackland Certified*". (PAC)⁵



Certification is for 3 years

Recertification requires passing a test, and is for 3 years

⁵ **NOTE:** We have been "certifying" companies until January 2008 -- so this issue will dissolve in time.

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

Loss of Certification

If the Company Rep determines that the Crew Leader is not upholding the values of Certification, the company Rep must notify the certifying agency, in writing.

If there is a fire and the cleaning company and/or crew leader is proven to be at fault; PA/CQ and PAC may be suspended.

Statement of Principles for Kitchen Exhaust Cleaners

The Statement of Principles includes a Mission Statement, Code of Ethics, and Competencies (also known as “Standards of Practices”). These principles demonstrate to the Authority Having Jurisdiction that “Certified” exhaust cleaners recognize an obligation to the public to perform services in a safe and responsible manner.

Mission Statement

The Certification Protocol recognizes the need to safeguard life, property and the environment. The intent of the protocol is to enhance the knowledge, skills of participants and help them meet personal and occupational goals.

Industry professionals value safety, and maintain integrity by performing work in accordance with acceptable standards and practices.

The Protocol supports success by teaching, measuring results and working to offer educational leadership. It attempts to create and establish a Code of Ethics, Competency/Standards of Practice and benchmarks recognizable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Code of Ethics

An ethical exhaust cleaner will:

- Hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

- Undertake and accept responsibility for contractual assignments only when qualified by training or experience
- Provide an opinion on a technical subject only when it is founded upon adequate knowledge and honest conviction
- Act with integrity towards customers, the AHJ or employers; maintain confidentiality and avoid a conflict of interest but, where such conflict arises, fully disclose the circumstances without delay
- Uphold the principle of appropriate and adequate compensation for the performance of their work
- Keep informed to maintain proficiency and competence; work to advance the body of knowledge within their discipline to include further opportunities for the professional development of their associates
- Present clearly to employers and customers and the AHJ the possible consequences if professional decisions or judgments are overruled or disregarded
- Promote public knowledge and appreciation of the technology and protect the industry from misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

Competency Standards

Achieving Competency or Standards of Practice

The development of competent standards is the beginning step towards the attainment of quality maintenance. It is the recognition of standard competencies that enables the AHJ to judge reasonable expectations from technicians in this field; and accordingly to insist that these expectations be achieved.

COMPETENCY STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION IN COMMERCIAL KITCHEN EXHAUST CLEANING

The following are recommended competency standards for Certification in the field of both ~~Inspecting~~ and ~~Cleaning~~ Commercial Kitchen Exhaust.

Kitchen Exhaust Cleaners shall:

- Identify that Fire Protection is central to their service
- Systematically inspect (for cleanliness), analyze and make recommendations regarding kitchen exhaust systems to end users, the AHJ, and other agencies as required
- Thoroughly clean all applicable components of kitchen exhaust systems
- Perform additional maintenance and necessary accessory installations

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

- Describe the safety factors of the work environment, equipment and methods of this field
- Demonstrate that they practice within the established law and jurisdictional requirements
- Demonstrate that they practice within the boundaries established by a Code of Ethics

Certification Training

Reference Sources

The following publications are the primary written sources of information used to compile the *Phil Ackland Certification Protocol*:

- *Phil Ackland's Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning and Certification Manual*
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 96 *Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations 2008 Editions*. (Excerpts in Cleaning and Certification Manual)
- International Mechanical Code (IMC), Chapter 5 Sections 506 – 507. (Excerpts in Cleaning and Certification Manual)
- OSHA regulations that relate to the kitchen exhaust industry. (Excerpts in Cleaning and Certification Manual)

Goals of the Training Program

The program provides a balanced core of basic knowledge, including:

- Understanding Fire Codes and Standards related to the exhaust cleaning field
- Recognizing responsibility when cleaning (What is a properly cleaned job?)
- Recognition of basic deficiencies related to accessibility and cleaning
- A protocol of documentation to inform owners (and others) of the cleanliness and accessibility of the exhaust system
- How to install Listed access panels and grease containment systems
- Becoming familiar with power washers and other tools of the trade
- Recognizing Safety issues inherent to this service
- Preparation for the Certification Test

Course Curriculum

The following is an abbreviated list of the curriculum.

Introduction

Goals of Certification

Statement of Principles and Ethics

Applicable legislation: NFPA, IMC and local jurisdictional by-laws.

Professionalism

Responsibility of Service Providers (Standards of Practice)

Accountability

Theoretical Concepts

Heat & cooking

Air Movement

Fire

Cleaning

Review NFPA #96 and Local Fire Codes

Understanding the local Fire and Building Codes and Standards as they relate to kitchen exhaust systems

What a cleaner needs to know about the Fire Codes to be able to report deficiencies to the system owner

Understanding Exhaust System Components

Hoods - Ducts - Fans

Working safely around fire suppression equipment

Auxiliary equipment

Understand Inspections (for Cleanliness)

What the AHJ is looking for from you

The limits of your responsibility

Inspection guidelines

Need for access

EPA Requirements

Wastewater Management

Phil Ackland's Exhaust Cleaners Certification Protocol

Related Safety issues

Installation

Access panels

Rooftop grease containment systems

Paperwork

How to create a paper trail, that will protect you and provide necessary information to satisfy the AHJ, property owners and insurance companies

Understanding the forms: Cleaning Proposal, Cleaning Performance Form, Job Service Report, After-Service Follow-Up Report

Photography to prove the system is clean

Summary

As an outcome of the above curriculum, the participant should have a solid foundation of the fundamental skills and knowledge of the Codes to be able to perform the tasks of both inspecting (for cleanliness) and cleaning kitchen exhaust systems.