

Even in the most efficiently managed commercial kitchens, unplanned disruptions can occur. For chefs and kitchen managers a key piece of equipment failing before a major event is a nightmare scenario. While there's no way to completely prevent the unexpected, mitigating such disasters is not only possible, but also makes business sense. A preventive maintenance (PM) plan can minimize equipment downtime, prolong the life of the asset, and bring cost savings to the culinary and/or facilities team managing such repairs.

A preventive maintenance plan is a critical component to any maintenance strategy and is key to lowering maintenance costs, reducing equipment downtime, improving asset lifespan and efficiency, and increasing workplace safety. Each of these benefits are explained below.

### LOWER MAINTENANCE COSTS

The U.S. Department of Energy discovered that properly maintaining equipment can **reduce maintenance costs by 25-30%\***. Inspections done during a PM can identify minor issues before they become a large one. For example, the evaporator for a walk-in freezer is not defrosting correctly and ice is building up on the evaporator. Over time, ice blocks the drain and water starts flowing over the drain pan and collects on the floor, freezing. At the same time, ice continues building on the evaporator and meets the fan motor, shorting out the fan motor. During a PM service this issue would have been found long before it led to equipment failure.

### REDUCED EQUIPMENT DOWNTIME

A properly utilized PM plan can **reduce downtime by 35-40%\***. When a piece of kitchen equipment is down, guests may be experiencing longer wait times, lower quality meals, or a limited menu due to the impact on food production. A last-minute menu change can stress the kitchen staff and lead to food waste. Preventive maintenance reduces the occurrence of these situations, keeping appliances running in good working order, and allowing the best possible customer experience to continue undeterred.

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND REDUCED CARBON FOOTPRINT

Well maintained kitchen equipment runs much more efficiently. In turn, the kitchen equipment consumes less energy, reducing costs and carbon footprint. Properly maintained equipment can **reduce carbon footprint by 20-25%\***.

### PROLONG EQUIPMENT LIFESPAN

Properly maintained kitchen equipment experiences **up to a 10%\* longer lifespan**. Preventative maintenance is key to this prolonged life. Equipment is not cheap, and preventative maintenance ensures the value of the investment is maximized with more hours of life from the equipment.

### IMPROVED SAFETY

Poorly maintained equipment can cause many hazards; these unsafe working conditions can result in serious injury. For example, ice on the floor of the walk-in freezer from an overflowing drain pan can be a slip and fall hazard. A stuck-closed pressure relief valve on a deep fryer could lead to an explosion. Preventive maintenance is a proactive approach to workplace safety.

In conclusion, a PM plan leads to:

1. Fewer reactive services calls
2. Reducing costs associated with reactive repairs
3. Minimizing the food waste from equipment downtime
4. Lower energy consumption (and therefore carbon footprint)
5. Extending the life of equipment