

Grease removal devices – California

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 4 of the California Mechanical Code (CMC) became effective on January 1, 2023. California restaurants should be aware of those requirements, including the information related to grease removal devices in cooking operations in section 509.

- Grease filters are addressed in CMC 509.0 and NFPA 96:6.1.
- Solid fuel filters are addressed in CMC 517.0 and NFPA 96:15.5.

Below are several additional items commercial cooking operations should know. Consult your copy of the California Fire Code, California Mechanical Code and/or NFPA 96 for full details and exact verbiage.



- Filter equipped exhaust systems shall not be operated with filters removed (CMC 514.1.1 and NFPA 96:12.1.2).
- Grease filters shall be listed with UL1046 (CMC 509.1 and NFPA 96:6.1.2 and 6.2.3.1).
- Grease filters shall be made of steel or other non-combustible material that will not crush or distort under normal conditions (CMC 509.2.3 and NFPA 96:6.2.3.2 and 6.2.3.3).
- Mesh filters shall not be used unless part of a listed hood in conjunction with a primary filter (CMC 509.1.1 and NFPA 96:6.1.3).
- Filters shall not be less than 18 inches from the cooking surface (CMC 509.2 and NFPA 96:6.1.2.1).
- Filters over solid fuel appliances and any charbroilers shall not be less than 4 feet from the cooking surface (CMC 509.2.1 and NFPA 96:6.2.1.2).
- Where the distance between the appliance flue outlet (heat source) and the filters is less than 18 inches, a steel (or stainless steel) baffle plate may be used so that flames and combustible gases travel at least 18 feet, as long as the baffle plate is not less than 6 feet from the filters (CMC 509.2.2 and NFPA 96:6.2.2.1, .2, .3, .4).
- Filters shall be arranged so all exhaust air passes through the filters (CMC 509.2.3.1 and NFPA 96:6.2.3.4).
- Filters shall be easily accessible for removal (CMC 509.2.3.2 and NFPA 96:6.2.3.5).
- Filters shall be installed at no less than 45 degrees from horizontal (CMC 509.2.3.3 and NFPA 96:6.2.3.6).
- Grease drip cups, not exceeding 1 gallon in capacity, shall be installed beneath the lower edge of the filters (CMC 509.2.4, 2.4.1 and NFPA 96:6.2.4.1, 6.2.4.3).
- Spark arresting devices or spark arresting filters shall be used if airborne sparks or embers can be generated and must be at least 4 feet above the appliance (CMC 517.5.1, 517.5.2 and NFPA 96:15.5.2, 15.5.3).

The information in this document is based on NFPA 30 (2018); for further guidance on flammable liquids storage, refer to NFPA codes.