Restaurant manager electrocuted



A restaurant manager died after contacting a faulty refrigerator.

The victim was cleaning the floor of the kitchen after hours. His wife and two-year-old daughter waited in the dining area. He was wearing tennis shoes, had put soap and water on the floor and was walking towards the dining area when he slipped.

While falling, he grabbed the handle of a nearby commercial refrigerator. Its cord did not have a ground plug, and excessive wear on insulation of conductors (bringing electricity to the compressor) had caused a ground fault. The conductors were exposed at a cutout hole in the refrigerator case.

The victim’s wife heard the noise. She tried to separate the victim from the appliance. Despite being shocked, she dragged the victim into the dining area and started cardiopulmonary resuscitation. She contacted his father, the owner, who called emergency responders. It was too late.

Since kitchens resemble familiar home environments, restaurant managers often don’t recognize hazards. However, restaurant hazards are more severe because of the increased level of activity in a commercial operation.

All electrical equipment should comply with the National Electrical Code. All electrical receptacles should be protected by ground fault circuit interrupter breakers or receptacles. Employees need safety training.