

**INTERPRETATION BULLETIN**

Office of the Fire Commissioner

September 8, 2003

MESH FILTERS PROHIBITED IN COMMERCIAL KITCHEN VENTILATION INSTALLATIONS

The purpose of this Bulletin is to clarify the reference to "mesh filters" in the NFPA 96 (1998) "Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations".

NFPA 96 (1998) Sentence 3-2.3 states; "Grease filters shall be listed and constructed of steel or listed equivalent material and shall be of rigid construction that will not distort or crush under normal operation, handling, and cleaning conditions. Filters shall be tight fitting and firmly held in place."

Grease filters are defined as "a removable component of the grease removal system designed to capture grease and direct it to a safe collection point."

NFPA 96 prohibits mesh filters by stating; "Mesh filters shall not be used."

A mesh filter, also known as a **Grease Filter Mesh Type** in NFPA 96, is defined as "a general-purpose air filter designed to collect and **retain** lint and grease from the air passing through it. This type of filter is not tested, listed, or acceptable for commercial cooking operations due to the increased fire hazard."

Examples of prohibited mesh-type filters are those found on many residential style kitchen hoods and in the ductwork of forced air furnaces. These filters tend to collect and retain grease without the ability to direct it to a safe collection point.

All grease filters shall be listed and installed in accordance with the manufacturers listing and instructions.

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