



FIRE EXTINGUISHERS (PORTABLE)

The law requires that employers provide portable fire extinguishers and that employers mount, locate and identify the fire extinguishers so that they are readily accessible to employees. NFPA and state laws have additional regulations; managers should know the laws in their state.

Minimum regulations are as follows:

- Extinguishers must be mounted to a wall (not sitting on a floor or table).
 - Extinguishers weighing less than 40 pounds should be hung so that the top is not more than 5 feet above the ground, but no lower than 4 inches above the floor.
 - Extinguishers weighing more than 40 pounds should be hung so that the top is no more than 3-1/2 feet from the floor, but no lower than 4 inches above the floor.
- Extinguishers must be readily accessible, not blocked by other objects.
- Extinguishers must be maintained in a fully charged and operable condition, and subject to an annual maintenance check.
 - Record the annual maintenance date and retain this record for one year after the last entry or the life of the fire extinguisher, whichever is less.
- Replacement extinguishers must be provided when fire extinguishers are removed from service for maintenance and recharging.
- Travel distance:
 - Class A fires, the travel distance for employees to any extinguisher is 75 feet or less.
 - Class B fires, the travel distance for employees to any extinguisher is 50 feet or less.
 - Class C fires, the same as Class A or Class B fires, depending on the hazard.
- To assist employees with locating a fire extinguisher, a sign pointing to the extinguisher is required to be placed immediately above each fire extinguisher at a height that can be seen from the farthest distance.



Many sign styles can be found easily on the internet. A commonly used sign can be found at www.grainger.com.

Annual Training

All employees must be trained annually. To help accomplish this required education requirement, hang a poster. There are many posters found on-line. Landry's recommended fire extinguisher instructional poster can be found at www.laborlawcc.com.

Our Company policy does not *require* that any employee stay in a building with a fire and attempt to fight a fire. Exiting the building safely and avoiding injuries from fires is the primary concern.

Guidelines When Using a Fire Extinguisher



If the fire is small enough, use a nearby fire extinguisher to control the fire, and follow these guidelines:

- First, always sound the fire alarm and call 911.
- Never try to extinguish a fire if the fire becomes life threatening.
- Use the buddy system; notify someone before trying to extinguish a fire.
- Do not fight a fire if you do not know what is burning and what type of extinguisher to use.
- Do not fight a fire if you do not have the proper equipment.
- Do not fight a fire if the fire might block your means of escape.
- Do not fight a fire if you might inhale toxic smoke.

Most fire extinguisher operate using the following P.A.S.S. technique:

PULL... Pull the pin. This will also break the tamper seal.

AIM... Aim low, pointing at the base of the fire.

SQUEEZE... Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.

SWEEP... Sweep from side to side at the base of the fire until it appears to be out.



Helpful Hints About Fires

A fire needs 3 elements to burn. Heat, oxygen and a fuel source.

There are three classes of fires:

- Type "A" – Caused by wood, paper, rags, textile, rubber
- Type "B" – Caused by gas, oil, grease
- Type "C" – Caused by electrically energized equipment, motors