

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Refresher Safety: Fire Extinguisher Use



If an untrained person tries to extinguish a fire, they may be okay or they may cause a serious mistake, resulting in someone getting hurt or killed.

FOUR THINGS TO REMEMBER IN FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE:

- **Use your judgment-** When you see smoke or fire, use good judgment before attempting to extinguish the blaze.

Ask yourself these three questions:

- ~Is the fire limited in size and spread?
- ~Have I got an escape route, if needed?
- ~Where is the nearest fire extinguisher?

If all of these questions can be answered in your mind, then you can probably start to extinguish the blaze. If not, then obviously, you need to get out immediately and call the fire department.

- **Communicate-** Once you make the decision to extinguish the fire, inform at least one more person where you are and what you are doing. That person should report your happenings to another person. Good communication is important.
- **Ready the Extinguisher-** Be sure to select the proper extinguisher for the fire. Extinguishers come in several classes and are used for specific uses. Some have multi-uses and others have special uses for specific types of fires. Be sure that the extinguisher is rated for the type of fire that intends to extinguish.

Class A- Use for ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, rubber and many types of plastics.

Class B- Use for flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, grease, tar, oil-based paint, lacquer based paint.

Class C- Use on energized electrical equipment including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers, and appliances.

Class D- Use on flammable solids such as magnesium.

Readying the extinguisher should also include:

- ~Quickly and carefully remove the extinguisher from the bracket. Be careful as it may be heavy.
- ~Stand about six feet from the fire.
- ~Extend the nozzle toward the fire.

- **Use it-** We shall assume that the extinguisher is in hand and ready for use. Make sure that the nozzle is aimed toward the fire before squeezing the nozzle; if it is not, valuable time and extinguishing agent will be wasted.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has a technique for using the fire extinguisher which is known as “The P.A.S.S. technique.”

P – PULL the pin that secures the handle.

A – AIM the extinguish nozzle at the base of the fire.

S – SQUEEZE the handle. (Don’t be nervous, as the sound and velocity of the agent is quite loud.)

S – SWEEP the stream of agent from side to side across the base of the fire until it is completely out. Watch out for re-ignition. If this happens, spray the fire until the extinguisher is out of agent.

Once you determine that the fire is out, back away carefully, being sure that the fire doesn’t re-ignite.

Knowing how to use an extinguisher is an important skill to know, but it is just as important to know when you can’t extinguish the blaze. You then need to evacuate the area immediately.

It’s good to familiarize yourself with using an extinguisher before a fire breaks out. Know what hazards exist and what type of unit will be needed for the types of fires within your work areas.

**PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY-
WATCH WHAT YOU HEAT-!!**

~THINK SAFETY

~ACT SAFELY~