

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER PROCEDURE

The use of a portable fire extinguisher to control or extinguish a fire is a decision that should be made based on an individual's training and knowledge of portable fire extinguishers and their use. The decision to sound a fire alarm and evacuate the building should not be overlooked while attempting to extinguish a fire. Refer to the "Reporting Emergencies" procedure for methods of reporting emergencies.

Upon hiring and each year thereafter, each employee shall complete a basic fire extinguisher use class. These classes are designed to provide the employee with the training necessary to decide if a portable fire extinguisher is appropriate for the situation, or if evacuating the building and notifying the proper authority is the best decision.

Fire is broken down into 4 major categories:

- Class A – Ordinary combustibles (wood, paper, plastic etc.)
- Class B – Flammable liquids (gasoline, oil,)
- Class C – Energized electrical equipment (anything plugged in)
- Class D – Combustible metal (metal shavings, magnesium)

The type of fire that is to be extinguished will determine which type of fire extinguisher is to be used. There are many different types of fire extinguisher available.

- *Multi-purpose dry chemical..Class A, B and C fires
- Dry Chemical.....Class B and C fires
- Dry PowderClass D fires
- WaterClass A fires
- HalonClass B and C fires
- Foam..... Class A and B fires
- Carbon Dioxide.....Class B and C fires

*Most common extinguisher found in the workplace.

Once you have determined if the fire is small enough to extinguish with a portable fire extinguisher and the proper type, make the necessary notifications and proceed to the nearest fire extinguisher. Follow these steps to extinguish the fire:

Use the acronym PASS to help remember the correct extinguishment method.

P - Pull the pin from the handle of the extinguisher breaking the thin plastic seal.

A - Aim the extinguisher at the base for the fire. If the hose is clipped to the extinguisher body, remove it before discharge.

S - Squeeze the handle to discharge the extinguishing agent. You must stand close enough to the fire to reach it with the stream.

S – Sweep the extinguisher stream back and forth from left to right until the fire has been extinguished or the extinguisher is empty. The average extinguisher will only last about **30 seconds**.

If the fire is not extinguished using one extinguisher or if the breathing conditions become difficult, immediately exit the building and ensure that the proper authorities are notified (i.e. the fire department).