

4 - Fire Extinguishers: Safety Training

EH&S – MGA

Goals: This safety session should teach you to:

- A. Know how to select the right fire extinguisher for a fire.
- B. Know how and when to use a fire extinguisher.

OSHA Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.157

1. OSHA Requires Most Employers to Have and Maintain Fire Extinguishers

- A. Approved, fully charged, operable extinguishers must be placed and identified, so employees can reach them easily.
- B. Extinguishers must be visually inspected monthly and tested at least yearly to be sure they're working properly.
- C. Be sure to find the fire extinguishers near you in your work site.

2. Use Fire Extinguishers Only on Small, Contained Fires

- A. If in doubt, sound alarm, evacuate properly, and let trained firefighters handle it.

3. Use Class A Extinguishers on Fires of Ordinary Combustibles

- A. They wet down and cool fires involving paper, cloth, trash, wood, etc.
- B. Class A extinguisher numbers (1-A, 2-A, etc.) indicate the size fire each can handle.
 - o The higher the number, the larger the fire area it can handle.
- C. OSHA requires Class A's to be no more than 75 feet from the area of likely use.

4. Use Class B Extinguishers on Fires Involving Gases or Flammable Liquids

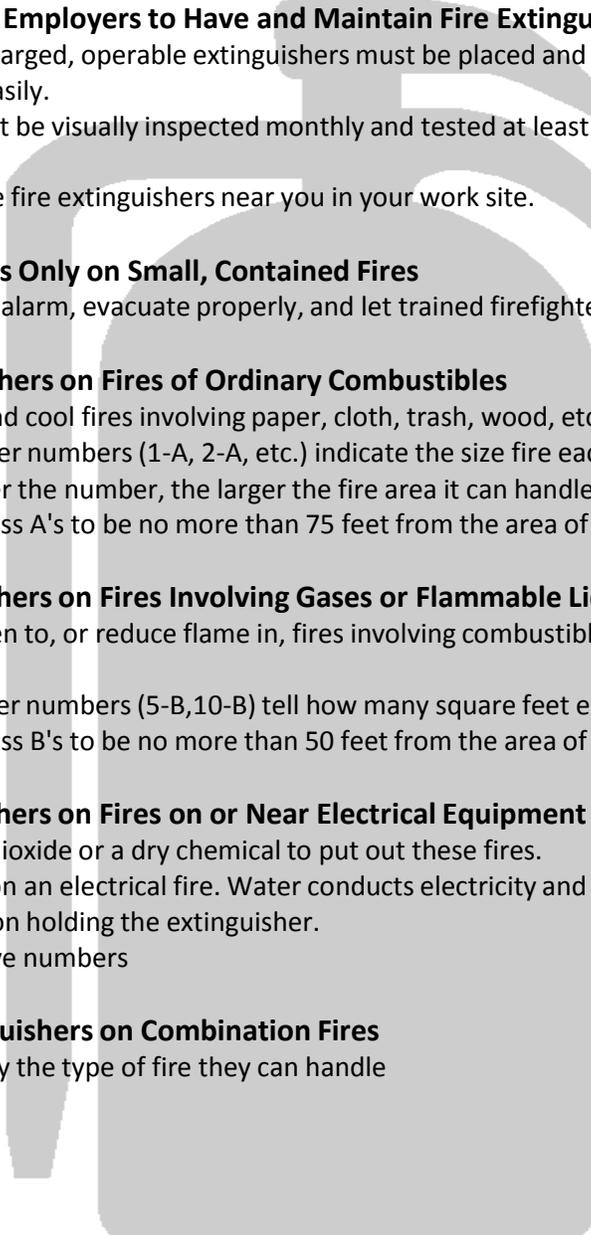
- A. They cut off oxygen to, or reduce flame in, fires involving combustibles such as grease, oil, paint, solvents.
- B. Class B extinguisher numbers (5-B,10-B) tell how many square feet each can handle.
- C. OSHA requires Class B's to be no more than 50 feet from the area of likely use.

5. Use Class C Extinguishers on Fires on or Near Electrical Equipment

- A. They use carbon dioxide or a dry chemical to put out these fires.
- B. Never use water on an electrical fire. Water conducts electricity and could cause a dangerous shock to the person holding the extinguisher.
- C. Class C's don't have numbers

6. Use ABC or BC Extinguishers on Combination Fires

- A. The letters identify the type of fire they can handle



7. Use Class D Extinguishers on Combustible Metal Fires

- A. They're used on sodium, magnesium, zinc, potassium, powdered aluminum, titanium, and other combustible metal fires.
- B. They must be within 75 feet of operations that generate combustible metal powders, flakes, or shavings.
- C. Class D's are considered "special hazard" protection and have no numbers.

8. Use Extinguishers Properly

- A. If you feel a fire is small enough to handle with an extinguisher:
- B. Pull the pin.
- C. Stand about 8 feet from the fire.
- D. Aim carefully at the base of the fire; you probably won't have a second chance.
 - 1. Be especially careful not to spread combustible fires (e.g., by blowing burning papers out of a wastebasket).
- E. Squeeze the trigger.

Summation: Know How to Choose and When to Use a Fire Extinguisher

The right extinguisher, properly used, can handle small fires. In all other cases, turn in an alarm and leave the job to trained firefighters.