

# Purchasing a Fire Extinguisher

The Fire Department recommends a 2A:10BC minimum size fire extinguisher. This extinguisher weighs about five pounds. You will find the rating somewhere on the label. The A B C rating extinguishes all types of fires, including common combustibles like wood and paper, flammable liquids like cooking oil, and electrical.

This extinguisher will provide approximately 8-25 seconds of extinguishing agent, and has a 12-20 foot extinguishing range.

Extinguishers can be purchased through fire extinguisher companies or at local hardware and department stores. They range in price, and start at about \$30.00.

## If You Discover a Fire

- Your first priority is to start evacuation of your home or building. Contain the fire by closing a door (if possible) and alert everyone there is a fire. If you live in an apartment, pull the fire alarm. Make sure everyone starts to evacuate immediately.
- Send someone to call 9-1-1 to report the fire.
- Only fight a fire using a fire extinguisher if you are comfortable doing so. Remember that your safety comes first.

## Only Use a Fire Extinguisher If...

- Your home or building is already being evacuated.
- The fire is small.
- The fire won't block your escape if it gets too big.
- You know how to use a fire extinguisher.

If you cannot extinguish the fire, contain it to the room by closing doors. Evacuate immediately. If there is smoke, remember to crawl low under the smoke.

## How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

- **P - A - S - S** is an easy way to help you remember how to use a fire extinguisher.

**P** - Pull the pin

**A** - Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire

**S** - Squeeze the handle

**S** - Sweep the nozzle back and forth, walking towards the fire

- Stand about 12-20 feet away from the fire, and walk towards it while spraying the extinguishing agent at the base of the fire.
- After the fire is extinguished, watch to make sure the fire doesn't flare up again.
- Always make sure to report any fire to the fire department by calling 9-1-1.

## **Fire Extinguisher Maintenance**

- Once a fire extinguisher has been used, it cannot be used again unless it is serviced by a fire extinguisher company. The gauge on the fire extinguisher should always be in the green area - ready to go. You can also choose to simply replace it with a new one.
- When you purchase your extinguishers, consider the types of fittings. Many service companies will not service and recharge extinguishers with plastic fittings because they may leak after. They will service extinguishers with metal fittings.
- Examine your extinguishers on a regular basis. Check to make sure the gauge is in the green "ready" area. To loosen up the powder, hold the extinguisher at an angle and hit it on the floor. Then rotate the extinguisher back and forth so the chemical moves through the vessel.

## **Extinguisher Locations**

- You should have at least one extinguisher for the inside of your home, and one in the garage. Make sure they are easily accessible and won't become blocked by storage or other items.
- If you live in a multi-family complex, fire extinguishers should be located throughout the common areas of the complex. For added protection you can provide your own personal fire extinguisher in your unit.
- Also put extinguishers in motor and recreational vehicles, such as motor homes, campers, trailers, and boats.