



Fire Extinguishers

A fire safety inspection checklist

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About Fire Extinguishers

Different kinds of fires require different forms of extinguishing agents. Each extinguisher is prominently marked with the letter of the class of fire it is designed to extinguish.

Fires are classified by the type of material that is burning. Fires are divided into five classes:

A, B, C, D, and K.

A: Class A fires involve ordinary combustibles like paper, wood, cloth and most plastics.

B: Class B fires involve flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil and solvents.

C: Class C fires involve electrical equipment including electrical outlets and wiring.

D: Class D fires involve combustible metals like magnesium, titanium, aluminum, sodium and potassium.

K: Class K fires involve combustible cooking media such as animal or vegetable oils and fats.

Extinguisher Inspections

Have your extinguisher inspected once a year. By law, only a technician licensed by the State Fire Marshal's Office of the Texas Department of Insurance can conduct the inspection.

The inspector can refill the extinguisher agent, if the extinguisher has been discharged.



For more information:
State Fire Marshal's Office
P.O. Box 149221 (Mail Code 112-FM)
Austin, Texas 78714-9221
512-676-6800 FAX: 512-490-1063
E-mail: fire.marshall@tdi.texas.gov
Web site: <http://www.tdi.texas.gov>

Periodically check the extinguisher's pressure gauge to see that it is set at the correct level. If not, call an inspector to correct the problem.

If you have a permanently installed fire extinguisher, the installation company's name should be on the tag. The company should be licensed to perform inspections and refill the extinguishing agent.

You can find licensed dealers in the telephone directory, by calling the Better Business Bureau, contacting your local fire department, or searching the State Fire Marshal's Office list of currently licensed companies and personnel at www.tdi.texas.gov. If you are using a dealer for the first time, ask to see a copy of the company's license.

Preparing the Extinguisher, Preparing Yourself

- Check each month to make sure that fire extinguishers are fully charged, visible, and within easy reach.
- Before you attempt to fight a fire, have someone contact the fire department.
- Fight or Flee.** Understand a fire extinguisher's limitations. Don't overcommit yourself in attempting to extinguish the fire.
- Fight only small fires. The fire should be no wider than four feet and no higher than three feet. Portable fire extinguishers aren't designed to fight large fires or quick-spreading fires.
- Determine what kind of a fire you have.
- Learn the **PASS** system: Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep.
- Always have an exit to your back while attempting to extinguish a fire.
- Use the buddy system, if possible.
- Follow the **Four Steps to Fire Safety**:
1) Sound the alarm. 2) Call the fire department. 3) If the fire is stationary, try to extinguish it with your back to an exit. 4) Leave the building if your efforts fail, closing the doors as you leave.

How to PASS Your Fire Extinguisher

Pull the pin.

Aim low.

Squeeze the lever.

Sweep the nozzle from side to side.