

**Introduction:** All workplaces and jobsites should have fire extinguishers immediately available. Incipient industrial and commercial fires can usually be extinguished easily with ABC fire extinguishers. Employees should be trained to use fire extinguishers, know when to get out and procedures for evacuating the area. Employees should be familiar with fire prevention methods, and processes in the area that can catch fire easily.

### WorkSAFE Tips

#### ABC FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Class A – Ordinary Combustibles
  - Brush, wood, leaves, grass
  - Carpeting, furniture, upholstery
- Class B – Liquid
  - Oils, Liquids, Fuels
- Class C – Energized Electrical Equipment
  - Circuit breaker panel, electric motors

#### HOW FIRE EXTINGUISHERS WORK

- Fire extinguishers function similarly to an aerosol paint or hairspray can.
- Compressed gas stored within the extinguisher pushes dry chemical out of the extinguisher through the hose and nozzle.

#### POSTING ABC FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Post near industrial machines
- Post during hot work—grinding, welding, brazing
- Post in construction vehicles
- Post on all construction machines / equipment
- Post on loading docks
- Post in maintenance areas
- Refer to OSHA & NFPA fire extinguisher posting guidelines.

#### TRAINING EMPLOYEES

- Train employees on fire extinguisher locations.
- Train employees in fire prevention methods.
- Educate employees about processes in the area that could lead to fire
- Train employees in the safe use of fire extinguishers.
- Train employees in notification of others.
- Train employees in emergency evacuation.

#### SAFE DEPLOYMENT OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Never block fire extinguishers—keep clear access.
- Keep a path cleared large enough for a wheelchair-bound employee
- Have all fire extinguishers inspected annually.
- Perform an internal inspection of fire extinguisher readiness each month.
- Notify employees when a fire extinguisher is deployed or removed from its storage hanger.
- Pull the fire alarm or dial 911.
- Assess the fire before beginning extinguishment.
  - What exactly is on fire?
  - Are employees cleared of the area?
  - Is it safe to attempt extinguishment?
- Do not approach fires that are immediately dangerous and that cannot be extinguished safely:
  - Machine tire / split rim on fire
  - Fire in a flammable liquids storage area
  - Fire in an explosives vault
  - Fire near a liquid propane tank
- Only attempt to extinguish small fires.
- Do not use more than two extinguishers on a fire.
  - Using more than two extinguishers means that the fire is too large – get out.
- If the fire is too big or becomes out of control, evacuate immediately.

#### USING ABC FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Never turn your back to the fire.
- Use the **P.A.S.S** extinguishment method:
  - **PULL** – Pull the safety pin.
  - **AIM** – Aim the hose and nozzle.
  - **SQUEEZE** – Squeeze the valve handle.
  - **SWEEP** – Sweep stream into the base of the fire.

*These advisory materials have been developed from national standards and sources believed to be reliable, however, no guarantee is made as to the sufficiency of the information contained in the material and Missouri Employers Mutual Insurance Company assumes no liability for its use. Advice about specific situations should be obtained from a safety professional.*

# TOOL BOX TALK

# Fire Extinguisher Safety

**Discussion** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Instructor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Follow Up Items** \_\_\_\_\_  
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# TOOL BOX TALK

## Fire Extinguisher Safety

Date of Talk \_\_\_\_\_