

Portable Fire Extinguishers

Fight or Flight?



PROTECTING EACH OTHER
SINCE 1900

Equip your home with a working fire extinguisher! Your local fire department can help you choose the right one for your needs.

Location

Hang your extinguisher:

- According to NFPA guidelines
- In plain view. Don't use it to hang clothing!
- Out of reach of small children
- Near an exit door
- Away from stoves and heating appliances
- With the instructions in clear view. Never paint a fire extinguisher!

Read the instructions and know how to use your extinguisher. Don't wait until your house is on fire to learn this important skill!



Maintenance

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for care and maintenance.

Rechargeable models must be serviced after every use.

Disposable models can only be used once and must be replaced after use.

Monthly:

- Make sure your extinguisher is at operating pressure by checking the round pressure gauge on its head. Dry powder extinguishers must be gently rocked, top to bottom, to ensure that the powder inside has not compacted.

Yearly:

- Fire extinguishers should be given a maintenance check once a year.
- Extinguishers must be checked periodically for weaknesses in the tank's construction. Have your extinguisher hydrostatically tested on the date indicated on the service tag.
- Have your extinguisher regularly serviced by a qualified service person. Contact your local fire department for the one nearest you or check the yellow pages under Fire Extinguisher Service.

Using Your Portable Fire Extinguisher

Follow the manufacturer's instructions provided on your extinguisher. Not all models operate in the same way. A simple rule to follow is – **PASS**

- **P**ull the pin. Some models require you to remove a locking pin.
- **A**im low and direct the hose nozzle or cone at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze the handle to release the contents of the extinguisher.
- **S**weep the extinguisher from side to side while moving forward.

Fight or Flight?

Before you fight — remember:

- Evacuate the building.
- Call the fire department.
- Check to be sure your extinguisher is the right one for the job, and that you know how to use it.

- Home fire extinguishers are designed to handle small fires. Don't try to fight a fire if it puts you in danger!
- If you do stay and fight – make sure you have access to an unobstructed exit.

Classes of Fires

"A" class fires – materials such as wood, paper, cloth and rubber which are normally found around the family home



"B" class fires – flammable or combustible liquids, flammable gases, grease, oil-base paints, lacquers, some rubbers



"C" class fires – electrical equipment and household appliances such as televisions, radios, and stoves



"D" class fires – combustible metals such as magnesium, sodium or potassium



For general household use, we recommend a multi-purpose ABC extinguisher.

Selecting an extinguisher

Portable fire extinguishers are rated by independent laboratories according to their ability to handle certain types and sizes of fires. These ratings are provided on the label of the extinguisher. The rating may consist of a letter or a number and letter. The letter tells you what kind of fire the extinguisher can handle, and the number tells you how big an area it can cover. Numbers are found only on Class A and B extinguishers.

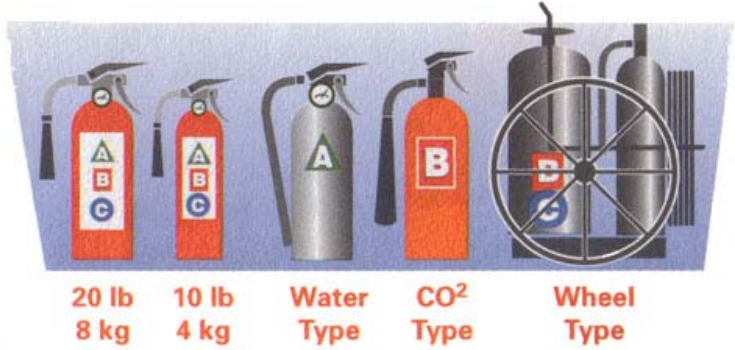
For Example: A fire extinguisher is rated and classified 4-A:20-B:C. This indicates the following:

1. It should extinguish approximately twice as much Class A fire as a 2-A (2 1/2 gal or 9.46-L water) rated fire extinguisher.
2. It should extinguish approximately 20 times as much Class B fire as a 1-B rated fire extinguisher.
3. It is suitable for use on energized electrical equipment.

Remember!

Portable fire extinguishers are designed to fight small, contained fires. The improper use of a portable fire extinguisher can make small fires become large fires very quickly. Make sure you know how to use your extinguisher, and the kinds of fire it is designed to fight!

Know which to choose – fight or flight! If you can't put a fire out immediately – call in the professionals! They are trained to fight fires! Never put yourself and others in danger. When fleeing a fire – close the doors behind you to contain the fire, and get out and stay out! Call the fire department from a neighbour's phone. Leave fire fighting to the professionals!



Metro Fire Prevention Association