



## PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

There are many different types of materials that can burn, but not all of them can be put out with the same type fire extinguisher. Today we will discuss the five different classes of fire materials and the various types of portable fire extinguishers that should be used to put out fires involving those materials (We suggest you make copies of the handout accompanying this toolbox talk and provide a copy to each trainee so they can follow along with this discussion):

- **Class A** fire extinguishers should be used to put out fires involving ordinary combustible materials such as cardboard, paper, wood, dried vegetation; basically anything that leaves an ash after it has burned.
- **Class B** fire extinguishers should be used to put out fires involving flammable and combustible liquids, such as gasoline, diesel, oil, and oil-based paints, and many solvents.
- **Class C** fire extinguishers are suitable for use to extinguish fires that involve appliances, tools, and other equipment that is plugged in or otherwise electrically energized, as well as for fires burning in close proximity to electrically-energized equipment.
- **Class D** fire extinguishers are designed for use to extinguish combustible metals, such as magnesium or sodium, and are often designed for a specific type of combustible metal. This does NOT include ordinary carbon steel, only metals that will burn when ignited.
- **Class K** fire extinguishers are designed to be used for putting out fires that involve oils and greases used for cooking in kitchens, such as vegetable and animal-based oils and fat.

Portable fire extinguishers will generally be labeled with the symbols for the types of fires they are designed to extinguish. For example, a type A extinguisher is suitable for use only on class A materials, and should never be used on a flammable or combustible liquid fire (oil and water don't mix). However, a type ABC extinguisher is suitable for fires involving all three of those classes of fire hazards.

If in doubt about the types of extinguishers that are most suitable for your work area, contact your safety manager or supervisor for additional guidance.

## Types of Portable Fire Extinguishers



**Class A** fire extinguishers should be used to put out fires involving ordinary combustible materials such as cardboard, paper, wood, dried vegetation; basically anything that leaves an ash after it has burned.



**Class B** fire extinguishers should be used to put out fires involving flammable and combustible liquids, such as gasoline, diesel, oil, and oil-based paints, and many solvents.



**Class C** fire extinguishers are suitable for use to extinguish fires that involve appliances, tools, or other equipment that is plugged in or otherwise electrically energized, as well as for fires burning in close proximity to electrically-energized equipment.



**Class D** fire extinguishers are designed for use to extinguish combustible metals, such as magnesium or sodium, and are often designed for the specific type of combustible metal. This does NOT include ordinary carbon steel, only metals that will burn when ignited.



**Class K** fire extinguishers are designed to be used for putting out fires that involve oils and greases used for cooking in kitchens, such as vegetable and animal-based oils and fat.

Portable fire extinguishers will generally be labeled with the symbol or symbols for the types of fires they are designed to extinguish. For example, a combination BC extinguisher is suitable for extinguishing fires involving flammable/combustible liquids and electrical equipment, whereas a type ABC extinguisher is suitable for fires involving all three of those materials

## PROPER USAGE

Use the PASS method when using a fire extinguisher:

- P** Pull the pin
- A** Aim hose at the base of the fire
- S** Squeeze the trigger
- S** Sweep back and forth with the extinguisher



### Remember these firefighting tips:

- Most fire extinguishers are emptied in less than a minute.
- Do not attempt to fight a large fire.
- Always leave yourself a way out--keep your back to an exit.
- All fire extinguishers should be inspected monthly by a responsible person.
- All fire extinguishers should be serviced by a qualified technician on a yearly basis.
- Fire extinguishers have operating instructions listed in the name plate; be familiar with these.
- Fire extinguishers of the proper type and size for the exposure shall be readily available.
- When fueling equipment, always have a fire extinguisher close by.

### Do:

- Do know the locations of extinguishers on the job site.
- Do familiarize yourself with the types of fire and what to use for each.
- Do remember the P.A.S.S. method for fire extinguishers.
- Do identify a safe evacuation path before approaching the fire.
- Do evacuate immediately if you have any doubt about your ability to fight a fire.

### Do Not:

- Do not use water agents on grease and oil fires or use dry chemical extinguishers on electrical devices or anything with metal because it is corrosive.
- Do not aim at the flames of the fire.
- Do not stand too close to the fire or even plan to walk on those extinguished areas.
- Do not put extinguishers in areas where fire is most likely to happen making them unreachable.
- Do not leave extinguishers in corridors or on anything that is highly magnetic.
- Do not play with the device or even play with its substances because of the possibility of injuring yourself.
- Do not block access to fire extinguishers.

**TOOLBOX TALKS  
PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Meeting Conducted By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees:**

Print	Signature	Print	Signature
1.		11.	
2.		12.	
3.		13.	
4.		14.	
5.		15.	
6.		16.	
7.		17.	
8.		18.	
9.		19.	
10.		20.	