

Fire Extinguisher Basics

Fire extinguishers are designed to put out a certain class or classes of fires.

Class A - cloth, wood, paper, etc.. anything that will turn to Ash. Put out by air pressured water or dry chemical extinguishers. Labeled with a Capital A in a triangle and/or a picture of burning trash.

Class B - Flammable liquids like oil, grease, gasoline, kerosene, etc.. liquids that will **B**leve (boiling liquid expanding vapor explosion). Never use water on a class B fire as it may spread the fire and cause injury. Use dry chemical or carbon dioxide extinguishers. Labeled with a capital B inside a square and/or a picture of a burning gas can.

Class C - Electrical fires, such as electrical equipment, and outlets. Think of items using an electrical **C**urrent. Use dry chemical or carbon dioxide extinguishers. Labeled with a capital C inside a circle and/or a picture of a burning plug.

Most houses and public buildings have ABC aka **M**ultipurpose **D**ry **C**hemical **E**xtinguishers because they are safe to use on class A, B and C fires. they are labeled with A, B and C. Fuel, Heat and Oxygen make the fire. Removing any one part of the triangle will put the fire out. Basically the ingredient of the fire extinguisher is like baking powder that separates the oxygen from the fuel and also interrupts the chemical reaction.

Fire extinguishers also have numbers that tell the size of the fire the extinguisher can handle. Example 2:A tells how much water or extinguishing agent it holds. 10:B tells approximately how many square feet of a liquid fire the extinguisher will put out. There is no number associated with C. The larger the numbers the bigger the fire it can put out.

Class D - combustible metal fires such as Magnesium, Titanium, Potassium, Sodium and others. Usually used in laboratories and industrial areas where these metals are found. These metals react violently with water and air. They are labeled with a capital D and/or a D inside a star.

Class K - vegetable oils used in restaurant cooking. These extinguishers were made to deal with very hot oil burning fires in restaurant settings. They are labeled with a capital K and/or a picture of a burning fry pan.

Never use a fire extinguisher on a fire that you don't know the make up of. Most extinguishes will only last 8 - 10 seconds.

Check to make sure the arrow on the dial is in the green which indicates it is fully and properly charged. Should be checked monthly. Any extinguisher older than 12 years should be replaced.

P.A.S.S. - **P**ull the pin, **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire, **S**queeze the trigger standing 6 - 8 feet away from the fire, **S**weep from side to side at the base of the fire.