



WHAT TO KNOW WHEN PURCHASING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Having a functional fire extinguisher is an essential tool against fire both at home and at work. They are the most common used tool and the first line of defense in the case of a fire. They are also the most overlooked tool in fire prevention. However, having a fire extinguisher and knowing how to use it can be the difference between a minor fire problem and total destruction. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) fires can be diminished by the use of a fire extinguisher. In approximately 80% of all fire incidents, a simple portable fire extinguisher is all that is needed to put out the fire. It can be difficult in choosing between the different types and sizes of extinguishers. However, all fire extinguishers function in basically the same way, require some maintenance and have a life expectancy.

COMMON FIRE CLASSIFICATIONS

When choosing a fire extinguisher, it is important to know what class of fire hazards are present. For the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher that can be used on all types of home fires.



“ORDINARY” COMBUSTIBLES

Paper, wood, rubber, plastics & textiles.



“FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS”

Oil, gasoline, solvents.



“ENERGIZED CIRCUITS”

Electrical equipment and computers.

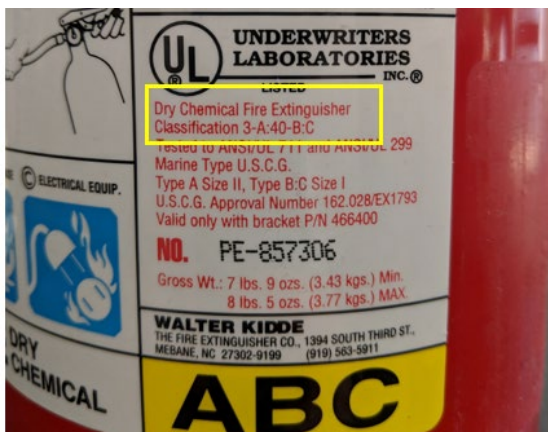


“KITCHEN”

Animal fats, grease, oils.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER SIZE

There are many sizes of fire extinguishers. It is important to choose a fire extinguisher that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle. The most common size fire extinguisher is a 2A-10B:C. For household use, a 1A-10B:C is often sufficient. Businesses or commercial occupancies may need a larger and/or a different class of fire extinguisher.



WHAT THE NUMBERS AND LETTER MEAN

All fire extinguishers have a UL rating consisting of numbers and letters. The numbers in the UL Rating are a relative measurement of how effective a given extinguisher is at fighting the class or classes of fire the extinguisher is rated for, represented by the letter. The number in front of the “A” measures water equivalency.

1A = 1.25 gallons

2A = 2.5 gallons

4A = 5.0 gallons

The number in front of the “B” is a relative measure of the area the extinguisher will cover.

10B = 10 square feet

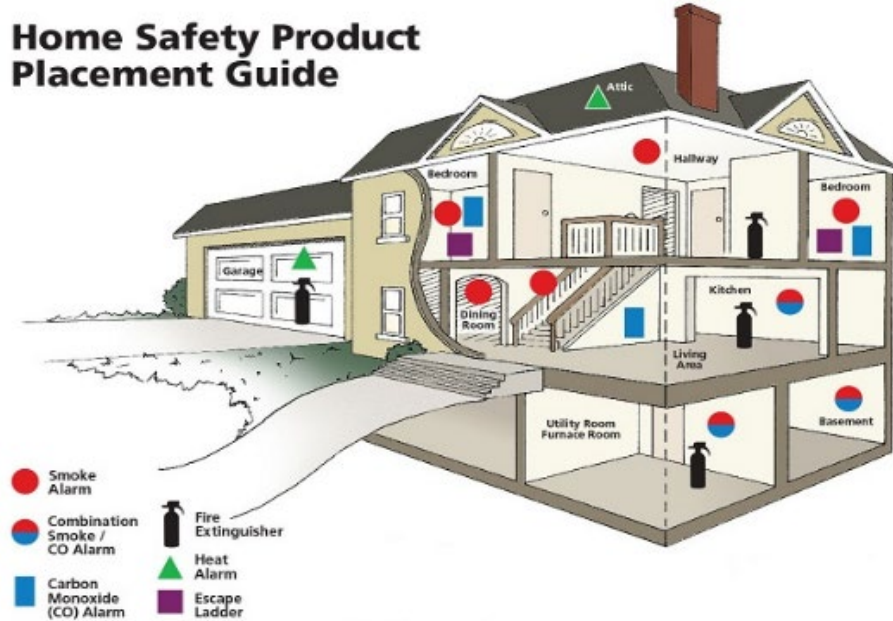
40B = 40 square feet

RECHARGEABLE VS NON-RECHARGEABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

There are various sizes and classes of fire extinguishers, there are also rechargeable and non-rechargeable types. Rechargeable fire extinguishers are built to be reused. When a rechargeable fire extinguisher is used, it needs to be recharged before going back into service. Non-rechargeable fire extinguishers are often less expensive but built in a manner that allows them to be used only once. Even if only partially discharged, a non-rechargeable fire extinguisher must be replaced after it is used. Determining which is better is a matter of personal preference.



Home Safety Product Placement Guide



COMMON PLACES TO KEEP A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

For household use there is no requirement of where to keep a fire extinguisher. However, there are several places in your home recommended to keep a fire extinguisher. Under the kitchen sink to handle any potential kitchen fires, in the garage, laundry room, patio for the grill or fire pit and any room with a fireplace, wood stove or furnace are a few recommendations. The fire extinguisher should be hung 4-5' on the wall for easy and quick access in an emergency.

LIFE EXPECTANCY OF A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

According to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, rechargeable dry chemical fire extinguishers **MUST** be recharged every 6 years, from date of manufacture. Disposable or non-rechargeable extinguishers **MUST** be replaced every 12 years, from date of manufacture.

DATE OF MANUFACTURE

The manufacturing date of an extinguisher is important when it comes to refilling, refurbishing or replacing. To find the age of the fire extinguisher look for dates stamped on the cylinder body, printed on the extinguisher label or printed on the extinguisher itself. Sometimes the date stamp is hidden under the plastic ring around the neck of an extinguisher or under the plastic boot of the extinguisher.



FIRE EXTINGUISHER DISPOSAL

Old or used fire extinguishers should be properly disposed of and/or recycled. Fire extinguishers are considered hazardous waste and should be properly disposed of at a Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Residents of Carlsbad can drop off old fire extinguishers free of charge* at:

STERICYCLE/PSC HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION FACILITY
1145 EAST TAYLOR ST.
VISTA, CA 95084

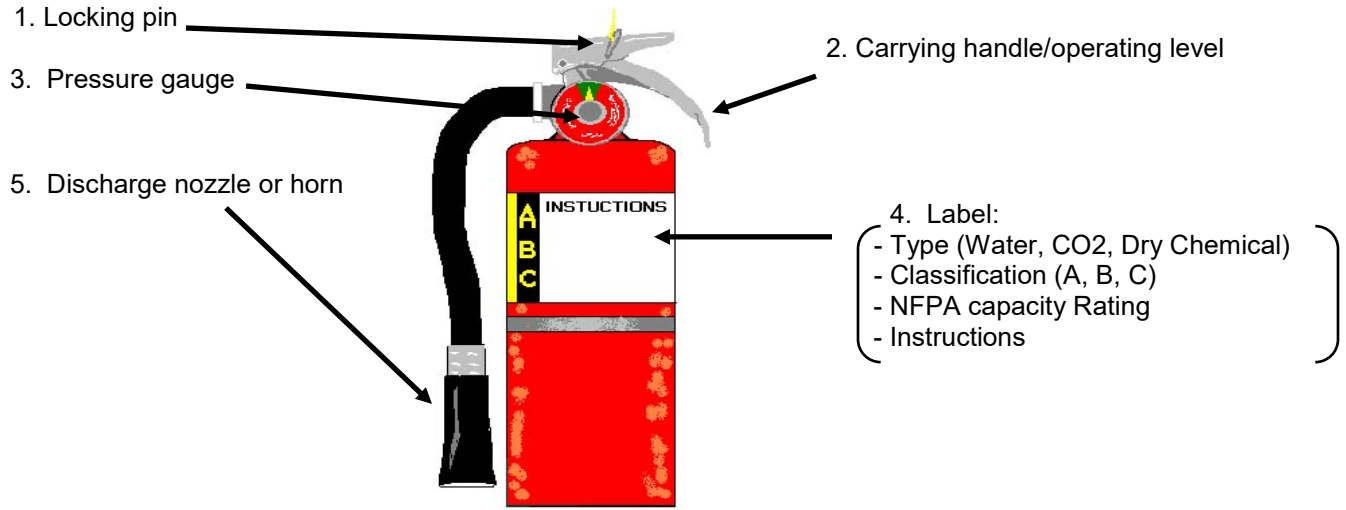
Or call for a free* pickup at your residence: 800-714-1195

*There is a fee for Commercial Customers

FIRE EXTINGUISHER GUIDE

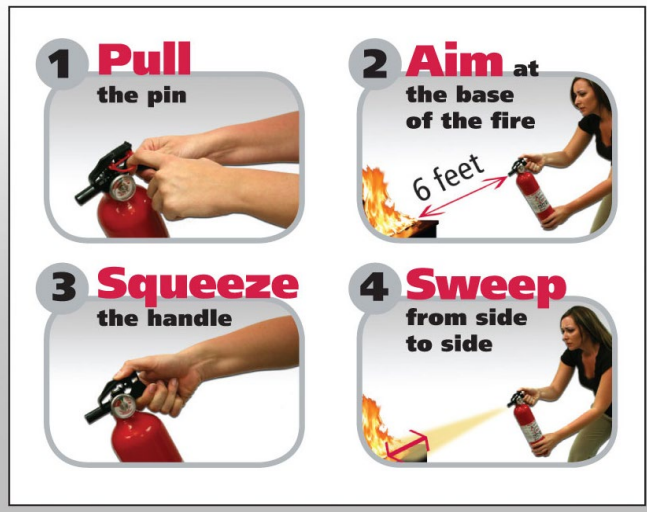


EXTINGUISHER COMMON FEATURES



HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Remember the Phrase **PASS**



SERVICING FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Includes maintenance, recharging, & hydrostatic tests. Testing and maintenance of fire extinguishers shall be performed by licensed contractors by the State Fire Marshal's Office who have the appropriate servicing manuals, proper tools, recharging agents, etc.

REQUIRED SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE

- Extinguishers are subject to annual maintenance and/or immediately after use
- Non-Rechargeable extinguishers shall not be re-charged or hydrostatically tested but shall be removed from service at a maximum interval of 12 years from date of manufacture.
 - **Exception:** Non-Rechargeable extinguishers containing Halon shall be removed from service not discharged and returned to the manufacturer
- Additional extinguishers in excess of those required are subject to same tests and intervals
- New extinguishers that are fully charged after being sold shall be subject to maintenance within 1 year from the date of manufacturer
 - **Exception:** Licensed extinguisher contractor may attach a tag with date punched into it with the date of purchase. These extinguishers are still subject to monthly and annual services