



## INSPECTION AND TRAINING

To help ensure their proper working condition, fire extinguishers must be inspected and serviced yearly by a third-party vendor and visually checked using the manufacturer's inspection specifications at least monthly. These monthly checks ensure that fire extinguishers have not been removed, activated, tampered with or damaged. The back side of the extinguisher tag should be initialed and dated after each monthly check or another means of recording established.

If there is an expectation that employees use portable fire extinguishers in the event of a fire outbreak, OSHA requires they be trained in their use. This training includes not only fire prevention and evacuation procedures, but also hands-on training in the use of extinguishers. Training is to be completed prior to job assignment and annually thereafter.

Employees who are authorized to use portable fire extinguishers must also be included in a written emergency action plan. If the emergency action plan orders the immediate and total evacuation of employees in the event of a fire outbreak, fire extinguisher training is not required by OSHA; however, emergency procedure training is necessary. For more information about emergency action plans, see Chapter 13.

## TYPES OF EXTINGUISHERS

Not all extinguishers are the same, they are divided into classes depending on the types of fires they are intended to put out. Using the wrong kind of extinguisher on a fire could create an unintended hazard, such as using a water-based extinguisher on electrical or grease fires. Refer to the included chart for information about the various types of extinguishers and how they should be used.

Server rooms or kitchens often have different types of fire extinguishers than other areas. Extinguishers can also incorporate different extinguishing agents to put out more than one type of fire with ABC being the most common, suitable for class A, B and C fires.

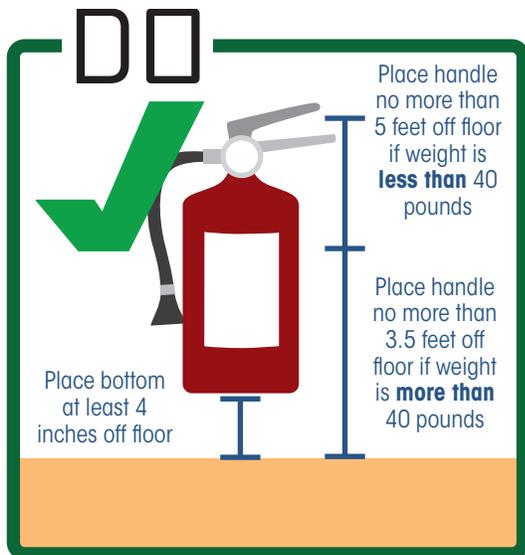
CLASS	TYPE OF FIRE	EXTINGUISHER IDENTIFICATION	SYMBOL
A	Ordinary Combustibles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper</li> <li>• Wood</li> <li>• Plastics</li> </ul>		
B	Flammable Liquids <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gasoline</li> <li>• Paint</li> <li>• Tar</li> </ul>		
C	Electrical Fires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live electrical equipment</li> </ul>		
D	Combustible Metals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magnesium</li> <li>• Sodium</li> <li>• Potassium</li> </ul>		
K	Oils and Fats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetable, animal oils or fats</li> <li>• Cooking</li> </ul>		

## PLACEMENT

In addition to inspections and training, there are requirements concerning the placement of portable fire extinguishers. International fire code requires Class A fire extinguishers to be located no greater than 75 feet travel distance apart in occupied buildings.

All fire extinguishers should:

- Have clear, unobstructed access and not be covered by jackets or other materials that obscure visibility.
- Have identifying labels or signage to mark their location clearly.
- Be mounted so that the base is at least 4 inches off the floor and the carrying handle is no higher than 5 feet from the floor. If fire extinguishers are greater than 40 pounds, the height of the carrying handle should be no greater than 3.5 feet from the floor.



*Follow proper fire extinguisher placement requirements.*

Certain buildings often include work areas that require specific sizes and distances for portable fire extinguishers:

- Battery charging areas require minimum 4-A:20-B:C rating within 20 feet of battery charger.
- Fuel dispensing stations require minimum 2-A:20-B:C rating no more than 75 feet away.
- Flammable storage cabinets require minimum 20-B rating no less than 10 feet but no more than 25 feet away.
- Flammable storage rooms require minimum 20-B rating located outside the room but no more than 10 feet away.
- Hot works/welding areas require minimum 2-A:20-B:C rating no more than 30 feet away.

Additional areas, such as lunch rooms and other potential fire hazard areas, should be equipped with an appropriate fire extinguisher. Local requirements may be more strict; contact the local fire marshal for questions about specifications for buildings.

**Further safety rules and regulations regarding portable fire extinguishers can be found in OSHA Standard 29 CFR1910.157, Portable Fire Extinguishers; and the Minnesota State Fire Code.**

**More information about portable fire extinguishers and their use is available at [OSHA.gov](https://www.osha-slc.gov) in the Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool.**



## FIRE EXTINGUISHERS CHECK LIST

ITEM	YES	NO	ACTION ITEM
Do all fire extinguishers have unobstructed access?			
Are all fire extinguishers up to 40 pounds mounted so their bases are at least 4 inches and the carrying handle is no higher than 5 feet from the floor?			
Are all fire extinguishers labeled so their location is clearly identifiable?			
Are all fire extinguishers inspected yearly by a third party vendor?			
Are all fire extinguishers checked monthly for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence?</li> <li>• Adequate pressure?</li> <li>• Signs of tampering?</li> <li>• Damage, defects or missing parts?</li> <li>• Clear nozzle?</li> </ul>			
Are monthly fire extinguisher checks signed and recorded on the back of the attached inspection tag?			
Are fire extinguishers mounted on vehicles that travel more than 75 feet away from another extinguisher?			
Are fire extinguishers located near fire hazard areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welding or grinding areas?</li> <li>• Flammable storage cabinets or rooms?</li> <li>• Other fire hazard areas?</li> </ul>			
Is the fire extinguisher appropriate for the type of fire expected?			