

Seattle Permits

—part of a multi-departmental series on City services & permitting

Fire Extinguishers

Updated September 2014

Requirements for Businesses

The type of fire extinguisher you need for your place of business is determined by the type of business and the materials found in the building. These also determine where the extinguishers will be located.

- **Retail stores, storage facilities, and parking garages must** have a Class 2A fire extinguisher for every 3,000 square feet. There must be at least one extinguisher on every floor. Fire extinguishers must be placed so that people do not have to travel more than 75 feet to reach one.
- **Parking garages** must have a Class 2A fire extinguisher at each pedestrian exit.
- **Office buildings, residential buildings, such as apartments or condominiums, and public assemblies** must have a Class 2A fire extinguisher for every 6,000 square feet. There must be at least one extinguisher on every floor. Fire extinguishers must be placed so that people do not have to travel more than 75 feet to reach one.
- **Boiler rooms** with oil-fired boilers require a class 10BC fire extinguisher within 30 feet of the room.
- Retail stores, storage facilities, and garages that have permits for the use/storage of **hazardous materials**, or that have permits for **hazardous processes**, must have fire extinguishers with a minimum rating of class 2A40BC. The fire extinguishers must be within 30 feet of each other.
- **Apartments, motels or condominiums with open balconies, or with exits that lead directly to the outside**, may have their extinguishers located in a manager's room, laundry room, storage room, or in exterior cabinets. This may be done with the permission of the Seattle Fire Department Inspecting Officer.
- **Restaurant kitchens** must be provided with automatic fire extinguishing and exhaust systems recognized for protection of commercial-type cooking equipment listed and labeled in accordance with UL300 for the intended application. In addition, portable fire extinguishers must be provided within a 30-foot travel distance of commercial-type cooking equipment. Commercial cooking equipment using solid fuels, vegetable or animal oils and fats must be protected by a class K rated portable extinguisher.

Installing Your Extinguisher

If your fire extinguisher weighs less than 40 lbs., mount it so that the top of the extinguisher is no more than 5 feet above the floor. If your fire extinguisher weighs more than 40 lbs., mount it so that the top of the extinguisher is no more than 3½ feet above the floor. Make sure that the bottom of your fire extinguisher is at least 4 inches from the floor.

Fire extinguishers must be placed so that they can be easily seen and are easy to reach. They should be placed where people usually walk.

Annual Testing

Fire extinguishers must be serviced each year to ensure that, if there is a fire, the extinguisher will work properly. The person who services your fire extinguisher must be licensed by the Seattle Fire Department. You should look in the yellow pages under fire extinguishers if your extinguisher needs to be serviced.

When the extinguisher technician services your fire extinguisher, they will attach a tag to it to indicate it has been serviced and on what date it is due for its next service.

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