Fire Extinguishers

Seattle Fire Department Fire Prevention Division

Choose the Right Extinguisher

It is important to choose the proper fire extinguisher for each fire. Fire extinguishers are labeled with letters and/or pictograms to indicate the type of fire on which the extinguisher is effective.

- Ordinary Combustibles Fire
  - A - paper, wood, many plastics, fabric, rubber, trash

- Flammable Liquids Fire
  - B - gasoline, oil, grease, some paints and solvents

- Electrical Fire
  - C - energized electrical equipment; appliances, computers, circuit breakers, wiring

- BC & ABC - Combination extinguishers can be used on two or more different types of fires.

Remember the P.A.S.S. Word

There are four basic steps to using a fire extinguisher.

- Pull
  - Pull the safety pin by grabbing the ring and twisting

- Aim
  - Aim the hose at the base of the fire

- Squeeze
  - Squeeze the handle

- Sweep
  - Sweep the hose from side to side while discharging

Get Out

If the fire gets bigger, close the door to slow the spread of heat and smoke and evacuate.

Be Prepared!

Training and practice are the best ways to prepare for emergencies. Make certain you know the P.A.S.S. system and understand how to safely use a fire extinguisher before you ever need to.

- Don’t force yourself to fight a fire that makes you uncomfortable or puts you at risk.
- Always let someone know and make certain 911 has been called before using an extinguisher on a fire.
- Fire extinguishers are small quick fixes. If you are unable to put out the fire with one extinguisher, leave and close the door behind you.
- A fire involving any portion of building structure is too big for a portable fire extinguisher.
- While using a fire extinguisher stay low, the smoke is filled with carbon monoxide and many other toxic gases.
- Don’t let the fire come between you and your exit. Keep your back to the exit and the fire in front of you.