

Remember the “PASS”- word when using a Portable Fire Extinguisher

Keep your back to an unobstructed exit and stand six to eight feet away from the fire. Follow the four-step Pass procedure.

PULL the pin: This will unlock the operating lever and allows you to discharge the fire extinguisher. Some fire extinguishers may have other lever-release mechanisms. Become familiar with the fire extinguisher before you need to use it in a fire.

AIM low: Point the fire extinguisher nozzle (or hose) at the base of the fire.

SQUEEZE the lever/handle: This should discharge the extinguishing agent. Releasing the lever should stop the discharge. (some fire extinguishers have a button instead of a lever.)

SWEEP from side to side: Moving carefully toward the fire, keep the fire extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep back and forth until the flames appear to be out. Watch the fire area, if the fire reignites, repeat the process.



Always be sure your local fire department inspects the site of the fire even if you think the fire has been extinguished.

Should You Fight The Fire?

Before you attempt to extinguish:

- ◆ Make sure everyone has exited, or is exiting the home/building.
- ◆ Make sure the fire department has been notified.
- ◆ Make sure the fire is confined to a small area and is not spreading
- ◆ Be sure you have an unobstructed escape route to which the fire will not spread.
- ◆ Be sure you have read the instructions and that you know how to use the fire extinguisher.

It is reckless to fight a fire in any other circumstances. Instead, leave immediately, close off the area and contact your local fire department.

In Case of Emergency
DIAL 911

Home Portable Fire Extinguishers

Gloucester County

Building Inspections

Department

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Fire Extinguishers Have Limits

Used properly, a portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives.

Portable fire extinguishers for home use, however, are not designed to extinguish large or spreading fires. Even against small fires, they are useful only under certain conditions.

The operator must know how to use the fire extinguisher. There is no time to read the directions during an emergency.

- The fire extinguisher must be within easy reach and in working order, fully charged.
- The operator must have a clear escape route that will not be blocked by the fire.
- The fire extinguisher must match the type of fire being extinguished. Extinguishers that contain water are unsuitable for use on grease or electrical fires.

The fire extinguisher must be large enough to put out the fire. Many portable fire extinguishers discharge completely in as few as 8 to 10 seconds.



Choosing Your Fire Extinguisher

Fire extinguishers are tested by independent laboratories and labeled for the type and size of the fire they can extinguish. Use these labels as a guide to purchase the appropriate type of fire extinguisher that suits your needs.

Classes of Fires

There are three (3) basic classes of fires. All fire extinguishers are labeled using standard symbols for the class of fires they can extinguish. A red slash through any of the symbols tells you the fire extinguisher cannot be used on that class of fire. A missing symbol indicates that the fire extinguisher has not been tested for a specific class of fire.



Class A

Ordinary combustibles such as wood, cloth, and paper.

Class B

Flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, and oil based paint.

Class C

Energized electrical equipment – including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers, and appliances.

The fire extinguisher must be appropriate for the type of fire extinguished. If you use

the wrong type of fire extinguisher, you can endanger yourself and make the fire worse. Multipurpose fire extinguishers marked ABC may be used on all three classes of fire.

Remember, in some cases it may be dangerous to use any type of fire extinguisher. For instance, pressurized fire extinguishing agents could spread a grease pan fire rather than extinguishing it.

Extinguisher Sizes

Portable fire extinguishers are also rated for the size of fire they can extinguish. This rating will appear on the label – for example, 2A:10B:C. Larger numbers indicate that the fire extinguisher can handle a larger fire, but higher-rated models are often heavier and difficult to handle. Make sure you can hold and operate an extinguisher before you purchase it.

Installation & Maintenance

Fire Extinguishers should be installed in plain view, above the reach of children, near an escape route and away from stoves and heating appliances.

Fire Extinguishers require routine care. Read the operating instructions to learn how to check your fire extinguisher. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on proper maintenance.

Rechargeable models must be serviced after **every** use. (Servicing companies may be listed in the Yellow pages under "Fire Extinguishers".) Disposable fire extinguishers can only be used **once** and must be replaced after discharged.