

# FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

This topic was created to aid you with your regular scheduled safety meetings. This topic was designed to be presented in 5 to 10 minutes with a minimum of preparation. Remember to fill in the documentation section on the reverse side.

Choosing the right fire extinguisher and knowing how to use it properly and safely is every employee's responsibility. Small fires can be contained and extinguished before they can cause damage to persons or property if the right fire extinguisher is used.

There are four classes of fires. Class A fires are those of ordinary combustibles or fibrous material, such as wood, cloth, rubber and some plastics. Class B fires are those of flammable or combustible liquids, such as gasoline, acetone, thinners, and kerosene. Class C fires are those of energized electrical fires, such as appliances, switches, panel boxes and power tools. Class D fires are those of combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium and sodium. These fires react violently with water or other chemicals, and must be handled with care.

Fire extinguishers are rated according to the type of fire they can extinguish. This information is listed prominently on the extinguisher. As part of this training, take a few minutes to become familiar with the location of extinguishers, type of fire extinguishers you have, and the type of fires you could expect in your workplace.

There is no substitute for hands-on training when it comes to learning how to use an extinguisher. You will want to remember the phrase "PASS" when using an extinguisher.

**P**—Pull the pin. **A**—Aim the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames. **S**—Squeeze the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright. **S**—Sweep the extinguisher from side to side, covering the area of the fire with the extinguishing agent.

How to inspect a fire extinguisher: Make sure that the pin, nozzle and nameplate are intact. Look at the gauge and feel the weight. Is the extinguisher full? Does it need to be recharged? Check the seal. Has the extinguisher been tampered with or used before? Report any missing, empty, or damaged fire extinguishers to the appropriate person.

## **SAFETY REMINDER:**

**Don't fight the fire yourself. Call for help. Never fight a fire if it is spreading beyond the spot where it started.**