



City of Montpelier, Vermont
"The Smallest Capital City in the United States"

FIRE EXTINGUISHER POLICY

Last Updated March 18, 2004

FIRE EXTINGUISHER POLICY

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Purpose

This program was created to provide our employees with procedures and policies regarding the placement, use, maintenance, and testing of portable fire extinguishers for the use of employees. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that portable fire extinguishers are placed throughout the City of Montpelier municipal properties so that the employees after proper training may readily access and operate them in the event they are needed. This program was prepared in accordance with OSHA regulation Section 1910.157 Portable Fire Extinguishers. Please note that where the City has an emergency action plan designating certain employees to be the only employees authorized to use the available portable fire extinguishers and which requires all other employees in the fire area to immediately evacuate the affected work area upon the sounding of the fire alarm, the City is exempt from the distribution requirements for use by employees.

All properties shall be classified by hazard class as defined within this policy.

It should be noted, that the portable fire extinguishers as defined within this policy are intended as a first line of defense to cope with fires of limited size, or those in the incipient stage only. Only trained employees shall be allowed this limited use to extinguish small fires.

Employees should refer their questions or comments about this program to the administrator.

The Program Administrator is

Eric Ladd, Public Works Department Supervisor

Annual review

The program shall be evaluated each June by each Department to determine its effectiveness and a written report submitted to the Program Administrator.

See evaluation form, page 8.

Classification of Hazard Areas

All areas within the City of Montpelier municipal property shall be inspected, evaluated and defined by hazard class. The Hazard classes shall be as defined below:

Low Hazard: General office, conference room and public “general occupancy” areas.

Moderate Hazard: General storage, workshop and laboratory areas.

High Hazard: Vehicle repair and flammable storage areas.

A classification example only is below:

<u>Building</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Classification</u>
City Hall	First Floor Basement	Building Maintenance	High
	First Floor Basement	PW, Planning	Low
	Second Floor	Admin.	Low
	Third Floor	Lost Nations’ Theatre	Low
	Fourth Floor Attic	Storage	Low
PW Garage	Break Room/office	PW	Low
	Shop/Bay Area	PW	High
PW Garage	Mezzanine -Storage	PW	Moderate
Fire Station	Office Area	Fire	Low
	Second Floor	Fire	Low
	Apparatus Bays	Fire	Moderate
	Maintenance Shop	Fire	High
Police Station	Dispatch Office	Police	Low
	Headquarters	Police	Low
	Basement	Police	Moderate
Wastewater Treatment Plant		PW	Moderate
Water Treatment Plant		PW	Moderate
Cemetery		Cemetery	Moderate
Parks		Parks	Low

Placement:

Extinguishers shall be conspicuously placed in each area, as follows by hazard classification, with no more than 50 feet of travel distance between extinguishers.

Low: Minimum of one five (5) pound ABC rated extinguisher per 3000 square feet of area protected.

Moderate: Minimum of one ten (10) pound ABC rated extinguisher per 1500 square feet of area protected.

High: Minimum of one ten-twenty (10-20) pound ABC rated extinguisher per 1000 square feet of area protected.

Employees may use up to a maximum of two extinguishers, provided the maximum travel distance between extinguishers does not exceed 50 feet.

All extinguishers shall be placed to afford unobstructed access, preferably along normal paths of travel.

Any extinguisher with a gross weight above 40 lbs. shall be placed so that the top of the extinguisher is not more than 3 ½ feet above the floor.

Any extinguishers shall be placed so that the bottom of the extinguisher is a minimum of 4 inches off the floor.

NOTE: A two and one-half (2 1/2) pound ABC rated fire extinguisher is required within six to ten feet of a cooking surface.

Marking:

Where extinguishers are not plainly visible, then these extinguishers shall be labeled from above so that the location can easily be identified from any location in the area protected. Labeling may take the form of stickers or hanging signs.

Inspection:

All fire extinguishers shall be inspected upon installation and every 30 days thereafter for the following items.

- 1) Location in designated place
- 2) No obstruction to access or visibility
- 3) Operating instructions on nameplate legible and facing outward
- 4) Safety seals and tamper indicators not broken or missing
- 5) Pressure gauges reading in operating range
- 6) Examination for obvious physical damage, corrosion, leakage or clogged nozzle

When an inspection reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed above, corrective action shall be taken immediately to rectify the situation.

In the event of a deficiency necessitating the removal of an extinguisher or in the event an extinguisher is removed for routine maintenance, a suitable replacement shall be made available immediately to afford continuous protection.

Testing:

Routine maintenance on all fire extinguishers shall take place on an annual basis by a qualified professional. (The City currently uses *Vermont Fire Extinguisher Company*.)

Routine maintenance shall include inspection by the above criteria, replacement of tamper seals, and an electrical continuity test performed on all Carbon Dioxide extinguisher hose assemblies.

All fire extinguishers shall be sent out for the following routine maintenance by a qualified vendor at the following intervals:

<u>Extinguisher type</u>	<u>Maintenance to be performed</u>	<u>Frequency (years)</u>
Pressurized Water	Hydrostatic Test	5
Carbon Dioxide	Hydrostatic Test	5
Dry Chemical (with Stainless Steel Shell)	Hydrostatic Test	5
Dry Chemical (without Stainless Steel Shell)	Discharge and Recharge Hydrostatic Test	6 12

Training:

All employees shall undergo annual training in the principals of fire extinguisher use and the hazards of incipient stage firefighting. Training will be conducted by a competent person as demonstrated by knowledge and experience. The name of the trainer, qualifications, training materials used, course content and date of training will be documented. Employees will be given a learning exercise during their annual training to determine their understanding of the program. New hires and transfers will be provided information during their orientation period. The learning exercise will be retained as proof of training for the duration of the employee's tenure.

See Employee Learning Exercise on page 9.

Record Keeping:

Monthly inspection records on all extinguishers shall be maintained on file by the facility manager for the life of the extinguisher.

Annual and monthly inspection records shall be maintained on file as well as on a tag located on the extinguisher.

The routine maintenance records shall be kept on file with all inspection records.

Annual Fire Extinguisher Program Evaluation

Program Name:

Evaluation Date:

Evaluation Team:
Name

Title

Department

Name	Title	Department

List injuries, exposures or near misses attributable to failure of program or failure to follow program:

Recommendations for additions to procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Recommendations for deletions of procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Recommendations for modifications to procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Description and date of actual modifications made:

Employee Learning Exercise

FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE TRAINING

Employee Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

1. True False In case of fire, you should use a portable fire extinguisher only if the Fire Department has been called and the building is being evacuated.
2. True False When using a portable fire extinguisher direct the extinguishing agent by aiming low and sweeping from side to side.
3. True False The following fire extinguishers can be used on an electrical fire: only those labeled ABC or BC.
4. True False The **PASS** technique for using a portable fire extinguisher means: **P**-Pull pin, **A**-Aim low, **S**-Squeeze lever and **S**-Sweep side to side.
5. True False Flammable liquids should be stored and used in areas that are: adequately ventilated, free of trash and combustibles, and not used for other storage purposes.
6. The OSHA requirement for fire exits are that the workplace have at least ____ means of escape and that fire doors cannot be blocked or locked.
7. True False All portable ABC fire extinguishers have the following features: operating handle, locking pin, pressure gauge, nozzle or horn and label.
8. True False All portable fire extinguishers need to be tested and recharged after every use.
9. According to OSHA all ABC portable fire extinguishers in a work environment need to be inspected every _____.

Appendix A

To view and download the Section 1910.157 Portable Fire Extinguishers from the OSHA web site, click on the following link:

<http://www.osha.gov/1910.157>

Also see NFPA 10

Print out a copy of the standard and mandatory appendices to include with your program.

Answers to Employee Learning Exercise

FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE TRAINING

Employee Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

1. True False In case of fire, you should use a portable fire extinguisher only if the Fire Department has been called and the building is being evacuated.
2. True False When using a portable fire extinguisher direct the extinguishing agent by aiming low and sweeping from side to side.
3. True False The following fire extinguishers can be used on an electrical fire: only those labeled ABC or BC.
4. True False The **PASS** technique for using a portable fire extinguisher means: **P**-Pull pin, **A**-Aim low, **S**-Squeeze lever and **S**-Sweep side to side.
5. True False Flammable liquids should be stored and used in areas that are: adequately ventilated, free of trash and combustibles, and not used for other storage purposes.
6. The OSHA requirement for fire exits are that the workplace have at least 2 means of escape and that fire doors cannot be blocked or locked.
7. True False All portable ABC fire extinguishers have the following features: operating handle, locking pin, pressure gauge, nozzle or horn and label.
8. True False All portable fire extinguishers need to be tested and recharged after every use.
9. According to OSHA all ABC portable fire extinguishers in a work environment need to be inspected every thirty days after installation.

