

For Your Safety: Selecting the Right Fire Extinguisher

Everyday you see fire extinguishers at work, but do you know what kind of extinguishers should be used to put out the different types of fires? Knowing what kind to use can make the difference between putting out the fire or just making it worse. Let's review the different types of fire extinguishers, what they are used for, and the common symbols found on the extinguisher's label

Class A Extinguishers will put out fires in ordinary combustibles, such as wood and paper. The numerical rating for this class of fire extinguisher refers to the amount of fire it will extinguish.



Class B Extinguishers should be used on fires involving flammable liquids, such as grease, gasoline, oil, etc. The numerical rating for this class of fire extinguisher states the approximate number of square feet of a flammable liquid fire that a non-expert person can expect to extinguish.



Class C Extinguishers are suitable for use on electrically energized fires. This class of fire extinguishers does not have a numerical rating. The presence of the letter "C" indicates that the extinguishing agent is non-conductive.



Class D Extinguishers are designed for use on flammable metals. There is no picture designator for Class D extinguishers. These extinguishers generally have no rating and they are not effective on other types of fires.



Multi-Class Rating Extinguishers are widely available today and can be used on different types of fires. They will be labeled with more than one designator, e.g. A-B, B-C, or A-B-C.



If you have questions about what type of extinguishers are available at your company, make sure to ask your supervisor. Next week we will review the basics of using fire extinguishers.

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