Fire Extinguisher Checklist



The threat of fire is present in any workplace and is often underestimated until a significant event occurs. One important measure is protecting the workplace from fire damage is proper maintenance of fire extinguishers.

Monthly inspections do the following:

- Ensure the fire extinguishers are present where they’re supposed to be.
- Ensure the fire extinguishers are in good condition and ready for use.
- Ensure the fire extinguishers do not need any service, maintenance or annual certification.

Training

- You need training so you will understand when and how to operate a fire extinguisher and hands-on practice to be able to operate a fire extinguisher in an emergency.
- Most portable fire extinguishers operate in a similar manner. Use the word PASS to help you remember the steps in operating an extinguisher.
  P – pull the pin
  A – aim at the base of the fire
  S –squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing material
  S –sweep from side to side until the extinguisher is empty

OSHA prohibits the use of fire extinguishers by anyone that has not been properly trained to use them. Training should be done annually and should also include a periodic practical component to give workers an opportunity to practice actual use.

Prevention – Performing an Inspection

- Make sure the extinguisher is in its designated place, is easily visible, and has unobstructed access for immediate use in case of emergency.
- Check that the annual certification tag is present and the fire extinguisher is within its service date interval. Tags indicate the last date of inspection so if a tag is labeled 2018 and the October option is punched or indicated that means it was last inspected in October of 2018 and needs to be re-inspected by a certified testing service by the end of October 2019.
- Check the pressure gauge for damage and that the indicator needle is within the operating (green) range. If the needle is out of the operating range it may indicate a loss of pressure, an equipment failure, or that it has been used.
- Remove the extinguisher from the mounting system to ensure it is easily accessible and that the mounting bracket/system is secure and in good condition.

- Check the extinguisher body and all external metal parts for signs of damage or corrosion. If damage is found remove extinguisher from service and replace. Have extinguisher inspected by certified testing service.
- For dry-powder extinguishers turn the extinguisher upside down and shake to loosen extinguishing media.
- Check to make sure the safety pin is in place and secured with an easily removable retention device, usually a breakaway zip-tie or similar.
- Check the hose and nozzle for damage.
- Check the labels for damage and legibility. The labels should clearly indicate the extinguisher’s size and capability. Ensure the correct fire extinguisher is in the designated location.
- Record the inspection. Most annual certification tags have a grid on the reverse side for this purpose. Record the date of inspection and the initials of the person performing the inspection.