



# Safety Tip of the Week

Your Safety Is Our Business®

Volume 4 – Issue 41

October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## Using Portable Fire Extinguishers

Do you know how to extinguish a fire? According to OSHA regulations, no one at a workplace is supposed to use a fire extinguisher unless they he or she has been trained to do so. Though this may seem awfully restrictive, there are several good reasons for this rule. If an untrained person tries to extinguish a blaze, some serious mistakes can happen. Any of these mistakes can cause the fire to become worse, or injure or kill the individual.

Fire extinguishers are meant to be used on small fires that are in their incipient or beginning stages and to protect evacuation routes.



### Use your judgment:

When you see smoke or fire you should use your own good judgment before you decide to extinguish the blaze. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is the fire limited in size and spread?
- Will you have an escape route if something goes wrong?
- Do you know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher?

### Responding to fires:

Sound the fire alarm and call the local fire department immediately if a fire breaks out.

Once you have decided to extinguish the blaze, attempt to fight the fire only if,

- You know the type of combustible material burning;
- You have been trained to use the fire extinguisher correctly; and
- The fire is still in the incipient (beginning) stage.

**If the fire gets too large or out of control, evacuate immediately.**

Most extinguishers will only allow about 10-seconds of extinguishing media. Prevention is the key when it comes to firefighting. Good housekeeping, proper storage procedures, and safe work practices will go a long way toward reducing the likelihood that a fire will destroy valuable property or injure either you or a fellow employee.

**Fire destruction is one man's job...fire prevention is everybody's job!!**



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