

If a fire should occur...

- CLOSE the doors to stop the spread of the fire
- SOUND the alarm, alert others to the danger
- GET OUT of the building
- NOTIFY the fire department

DO NOT go back into the building or try to save your stuff.

Clothes, books and papers can be replaced-

**YOU CAN'T!**

## **LIVING WITH FIRE**

A PROGRAM FOR CAMPUS AND STUDENT FIRE SAFETY

Living With Fire is a project to develop campus-oriented fire safety material. It will be made available, nationwide, through the US Fire Administration in November 2001.

Funding for this project was provided by the following organizations committed to reducing the tragic losses caused by fires involving students:

- American Cancer Society
- National Electrical Manufacturers Association
- National Fire Sprinkler Association
- NFPA International
- SimplexGrinnell
- United States Fire Administration
- University of Texas System

Living With Fire was developed by  
writer-tech.com, llc  
PO Box 1046  
Belchertown, MA 01007  
413-323-6002  
[info@writer-tech.com](mailto:info@writer-tech.com)  
[www.writer-tech.com](http://www.writer-tech.com)

**INFO BULLETIN  
ON...**

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# Fire Extinguishers

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## Fire Extinguisher Information Bulletin

### How do fire extinguishers work?

**Fight or flight...**The most important decision to make is whether to fight the fire or escape. This is a critically important decision, and may literally mean the difference between life and death.

First, before fighting any fire, you should know how to use the fire extinguisher BEFORE you facing the fire. This is not a time for "on the job" training.

You should also size up the fire and determine if it is small enough to be put out with a fire extinguisher. This is something that you can only learn through experience...and that experience comes with fire extinguisher training.

**What type of fire is it?...**It is important that you be able to determine what is on fire so that you can use the proper type of fire extinguisher to put it out. There are three classes of fuel

- Class A
- Class B
- Class C

Pressurized water fire extinguishers are for Class A fuels only, such as wastebaskets, small pieces of furniture, etc.

A dry chemical fire extinguisher can be used on all three types if it is rated as an ABC fire extinguisher.

Carbon dioxide fire extinguishers are commonly used on flammable liquids and electrical fires.

### **Before fighting the fire...**

There are a series of specific steps that you should always follow.

- First, make sure that everyone is out of danger.
- Either you, or someone else, must notify the fire department.
- Size up the fire...is it small enough to be handled by a fire extinguisher?
- You can back away from the fire if it gets out of control...make sure the fire is not between you and your escape route!
- Is your extinguisher the right extinguisher for the job? Is it matched to the type of fire?
- Is the fire extinguisher fully charged? You can tell by looking at the pressure gauge.
- Do you know how to use the extinguisher?

### **Fighting the fire...**

It is important that you know how to operate the fire extinguisher before you attempt to fight the fire. If you decide to try, remember the word PASS, which stands for:

- P** – Pull the pin that unlocks the operating handle
- A** – aim the extinguisher low at the base of the fire.
- S** – Squeeze the lever on the extinguisher to discharge the agent.
- S** – Sweep the nozzle or extinguisher hose from side to side. Move slowly and carefully toward the fire, continuing to sweep the extinguisher back and forth at the base of the flames.

### **Once it is out...**

Just because you have extinguished the fire, don't turn your back on it! Back away from the fire, watching it to make sure that it does not reignite. If the fire was in a pan of grease, for example, the grease may be hot enough to reignite.

Fire extinguishers should never be misused or abused. If an extinguisher is not ready to fight the fire because it has been discharged, then it has simply become a wall ornament-not a life saving tool!

### **Maintaining Extinguishers...**

One of the most important things about a fire extinguisher is to make sure there is enough pressure in it to operate. This is often indicated by a small gauge near the handle. Usually, an arrow will either point to a green area (enough pressure) or a red area (not enough pressure in the extinguisher).

Everyone is responsible for making sure the extinguishers are in working order. Each time you pass one by you can glance at the pressure gauge to make sure that it is ready to fight a fire.

You should check with your local ordinances as to how often fire extinguishers must be checked by a certified technician. At a minimum, they should be checked once a year.