



Fire Extinguisher

There are several types of fire extinguishers to suit different types of fire. Use of the wrong extinguisher could cause more harm than good.

Importance

In the event of a fire, quick thinking and action can stop the fire from getting out of control and save lives. It is important to identify the type of fire and the extinguisher needed.

Regulations

The Model Code of Practice and the Guidance Note for Emergency Evacuations at the Workplace sets the law on fire safety and covers risk assessment, means of escape, means of giving warning and means of fighting a fire.

Guidance

Types of fire includes:

- Class A: SOLIDS such as paper, wood, textiles, plastic etc.
- Class B: FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS such as paraffin, petrol, oil, etc.
- Class C: FLAMMABLE GASES such as propane, butane, methane, etc.
- Class D: METALS such as aluminium, magnesium, titanium, etc.
- Class E: Fires involving ELECTRICAL APPARATUS
- Class F: Cooking OIL and FAT, etc.

Types of Fire Extinguishers and the classes of fire they can be used on:

- Water (RED) – A
- Foam (CREAM/WHITE BAND) – A, B
- Powder (BLUE BAND) – A, B, C, D, E
- Carbon Dioxide (BLACK BAND) – B, E

- Wet Chemical – A, F

Note/s:

- Dry powder and foam leave a residue that maybe hard to clean up.
- Special powder extinguishers available for class D metal fires.
- Carbon Dioxide displaces oxygen so evacuate to the open air as quickly as possible. Not suitable for use in confined spaces.

SUMMARY

Knowing what type of extinguisher to use in an emergency could save your life, make sure you can identify the fire type and do not fight fire unless you are competent, and it is safe to do so.

