



Coffee Break Training - Fire Protection Series

Inspection Techniques: Fire Extinguisher Training Programs

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Learning Objective: The student shall be able to identify the elements of a comprehensive fire extinguisher training program.

A comprehensive fire extinguisher safety program should include both educational components and hands-on instructional opportunities to ensure students understand the relevant information and have the ability to put that knowledge to use in practice. Fire extinguisher programs can be tailored to the specific needs of the participants depending on the risks they may face and established emergency response protocols. Here are the key elements of a comprehensive fire extinguisher training program:

1. Fire Sources.

Describe the basic sources of fire and various methods for halting the combustion process. Learning these basic principles is vital for the trainees to understand what type of extinguisher is most effective for a given hazard.

2. Fire Classes and Fire Extinguishers.

Describe the types (i.e., classes) of fire and the extinguishers that should be used in each situation. Explain how different agents extinguish different classes of fire and stress the importance of selecting the proper extinguisher.

3. Identifying a Fire Extinguisher.

Teach how to identify an extinguisher, including its class and the size of fire it is designed to combat, by familiarizing the trainees with the extinguisher markings. Discuss the distinguishing features and characteristics of the extinguishers the students are likely to use.

4. Assessing a Fire Situation.

Focus on assessing and measuring fire risks. Trainees should understand how much fire can be extinguished with the extinguishers they are likely to use. With this information, trainees will be able to make the proper fight versus flight decision.

5. Fire Emergency Response.

Ensure that trainees understand how the use of fire extinguishers fits into effective emergency response methods. If the fire risk occurs in a workplace, trainees should understand the workplace's fire and emergency response guidelines. If the fire risk is at home, evacuation plans and 9-1-1 notification should be discussed. In all cases, trainees should be instructed to first sound the alarm notifying the fire department before attempting to use a fire extinguisher.

6. Practical Training.

Hands-on exercises will significantly increase trainee familiarization with the operation of a fire extinguisher. The acronym P.A.S.S. (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep) can be used to help trainees remember the correct steps to using a fire extinguisher. After notifying the fire department and selecting the proper extinguisher, trainees should pull the pin, aim the nozzle at the base of the fire, squeeze the handle, and sweep back and forth across the base of the fire in a controlled manner.



Live fire exercises with portable fire extinguishers are an important element of a comprehensive training program.

Thanks to the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association for this training tip.



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