

## FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Instruction and training are vital for effective use of an extinguisher. In the excitement of a situation, the uninitiated layman is much less likely to perform effectively than is an instructed person.

**In case of a fire, evacuate the occupants of the hazard area and call the fire department. Then use your training and extinguisher nameplate information to help ascertain if you can effectively deal with the type and size of fire you have.**

If you decide to fight the fire:

1. Maintain the proper distance (6 to 8 feet for most dry chemical and portable extinguishers).
2. If outside, try to position yourself so that the wind blows the fire away from you.
3. Pull the safety pin, or release any safety locks on the unit.
4. Hold your extinguisher firmly and begin spraying the agent at the near edge of the fire. (Most ANSI devices have a trigger to squeeze at the handle of the nozzle. Refer to nameplate on your extinguisher, and know how to activate your unit **before** the need arises).
5. Move the stream rapidly from side to side covering the entire width of the fire.
6. Advance slowly as your extinguisher pushes the fire back. Try to maintain the optimum distance from the front edge of the fire.
7. After the fire is out, step back and watch for possible re-ignition.

While fighting a fire or in cleaning up after one, try to avoid prolonged contact with the dry chemical extinguisher agent. The agent is not toxic, but prolonged contact may result in temporary eye or respiratory irritation.

Use "A"-rated extinguishers on ordinary fires involving wood, paper, cloth, rubber, many plastics, etc. **CAUTION:** Burning plastics may release toxic fumes.

Use "B"-rated extinguishers on flammable liquids, gases and greases, motor oil, paint thinner, dry cleaning agents, gasoline, propane, natural gas, etc.

Use "C"-rated extinguishers when live electrical equipment is involved to prevent possible shock or electrocution.

Use "D"-rated extinguishers for use on metal fires such as sodium and magnesium. More specific information will be found on the extinguisher nameplate.