

## Thurston County Development Services Fire Extinguisher Checklist



### Fire Extinguishers

Fires are classified according to three basic categories. Each type of fire requires special treatment to control and extinguish it. Therefore, all fire extinguishers are clearly marked to indicate the fire classes for which they are designed. Fires are classified as indicated below.

**Class A:** Fires involving ordinary combustibles such as wood, textiles, paper, rubber, cloth, and trash. The extinguishing agent for a Class A fire must be cool. Water and multi-purpose, dry chemical fire extinguishers are ideal for use on these types of fires.

**Class B:** Fires involving flammable or combustible liquids or gases such as solvents, gasoline, paint, lacquer, and oil. The extinguishing agent for a Class B fire must remove oxygen or stop the chemical reaction. Carbon dioxide, multi-purpose dry chemical and halon fire extinguishers are ideal for use on these types of fires.

**Class C:** Fires involving energized electrical equipment or appliances. The extinguishing agent for a Class C fire must be a nonconducting agent. Carbon dioxide, multi-purpose, dry chemical, and halon fire extinguishers are ideal for use on these types of fires. Never use a water fire extinguisher on a Class C fire.

**Class D:** Fires that occur in combustible metals, such as magnesium, lithium, and sodium. Special extinguishing agents and techniques are needed for fires of this type.

### Fire Extinguisher Checklist

The following information is a short list that anyone can use as a guide to inspect their fire extinguishers monthly. Although there is no guarantee that a fire extinguisher will work every time, or extinguish all fires, these simple checks can give you more peace of mind:

1. Check gauge on extinguisher. It should be in the “green” range. Not overcharged or undercharged. If it is not in the “green” then it must be serviced by qualified technicians.
2. Check the “seal.” It is usually a plastic tie of some sort that passes through or around the pin that prevents the extinguisher from accidental discharge. This “seal” must be intact. If it is broken or missing, then consider the extinguisher as empty and contact a qualified service technician.
3. Check the nozzle for obstructions. Most nozzles can be removed from the extinguisher for easier visualization. Look through the nozzle, or blow through it to remove any obstructions. Visually look inside the “neck” of the extinguisher where the nozzle attaches and see if there are any obstructions.

4. Lastly, lay the fire extinguisher in your hands, supporting it at each end, and gently rock the extinguisher back and forth. You are feeling for a “shift” in weight from one end of the extinguisher to the other. This will do two things, one is that it lets you know there is something inside the extinguisher and two; it “fluffs” up the chemical. An extinguisher just sitting in its holder on the wall, or in your car, will have its contents settle and possibly “cake” up. Tapping it and rocking it will fluff up the extinguishing agent, making it ready for use.

Who do I contact to have my Fire Extinguishers Serviced? Look in the Local Yellow Pages under “FIRE EXTINGUISHERS”

All fire extinguishers should be inspected by qualified technicians on an annual basis and every 6 years the extinguisher needs to be torn down, tested and examined by qualified technicians. Consult your yellow pages for certified Fire Extinguisher Service companies.