

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



February 4, 2013



## Safety Tips: Fire Extinguisher Use



All fires can be very dangerous and life-threatening. Your personal safety should always be your primary concern when attempting to fight a fire. An untrained person should never attempt to fight a fire. The result is: **Maybe** they would be okay, but in more chances than not, they could make a serious mistake. This could result in an injury or death to themselves or to someone else.

### TIPS ON FIGHTING A FIRE SAFELY-

- Stand several feet away from the fire, moving closer once the fire starts to diminish.
- When fighting the fire, always stand with an exit to your back.
- If possible, have a “buddy” system to have someone back you up in case something goes wrong.
- Be sure to watch the area for a little while afterwards to **make sure there is no re-ignition.**

### IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER IN FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE-

- ✓ **Use your judgment** – When you see smoke or fire, use good judgment before attempting to extinguish the blaze.  
**Ask yourself these questions:**
  - ~Is the fire limited in size and spread?
  - ~Have I got an escape route?
  - ~Where is the nearest fire extinguisher?If you can answer these questions in your mind, then you can probably start to extinguish the blaze. If not, then you need to get out immediately and call the fire department.

- ✓ **Communicate-** Once you make the decision to extinguish the fire, as referenced above, get a “buddy” for backup or at least inform another person of your location and what you are doing. Person #2 should inform a third person of these same instructions. Good communication is important.
- ✓ **Ready the Extinguisher** – Be sure to select the correct extinguisher for the type of fire involved. There are several types of extinguishers designed for specific uses. Some have multi-uses and others are for specific types of fires. Be sure that the extinguisher is rated for the fire that is intended to be extinguished.
  - Class A** – Use for ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, rubber and many types of plastics.
  - Class B** – Use for flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, grease, tar, oil-based paint, and lacquer-based paint.
  - Class C** – Use on energized electrical equipment including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers, and appliances.

**Class D** – Use on flammable solids such as magnesium.

**Class K** – Use for kitchen fires for oils and fats.

Readying the extinguisher should also include:

- ~Quickly and carefully remove the extinguisher from the bracket or cabinet. Be careful. It may be heavy.
- ~Stand about 6 feet away from the fire.
- ~Extend the nozzle toward the fire.

- ✓ **Use It-** We shall assume that the extinguisher is in hand and ready for use. Make sure the nozzle is aimed toward the fire before squeezing the nozzle; if not, valuable time and extinguishing agent will be wasted

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has a technique for using the fire extinguisher which is known as the “P.A.S.S.” technique.

**P – Pull the pin that secures the handle.**

**A – AIM the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire.**

**S – Squeeze the handle. (Don’t be nervous, as the sound and velocity of the agent is quite loud).**

**S – Sweep the agent from side to side across the base of the fire until it is completely out. Watch out for re-ignition. If this happens, spray the fire until the extinguisher is out of agent.**

Once you determine that the fire is out, back away carefully, being sure that the fire doesn’t re-ignite. Knowing how to use the extinguisher to put out a fire is an important skill to know, but it is just as important to know when you can’t extinguish the blaze. You need to then evacuate the area.

### DON’T FIGHT A FIRE IF-

- **The fire is spreading too rapidly** – Use the extinguisher when the fire is in the early stages. If it is spreading rapidly, evacuate the area and call the fire department.
- **You don’t know what is burning** – Unless you know what is burning, you won’t know what type of extinguisher to use. Even if you have an ABC, there could be something that would explode or produce highly toxic smoke.
- **You don’t have the right type of fire extinguisher** – The wrong type of extinguisher can be dangerous or life-threatening.
- **There is too much smoke or you are at risk of inhaling smoke.** Seven out of ten fire-related deaths occur from breathing poisonous gases produced by fire.

Any sort of fire will produce some carbon monoxide, the most deadly gas produced by a fire. Smoke inhalation or exposure to fire can be life threatening, so it will be prudent for you get educated in the basis of CPR and burn treatment.

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MAFES / MSU-ES (662) 566-2201 11/7/2012  
Excerpts: [www.webworldinc.com](http://www.webworldinc.com)  
[www.fire-extinguisher101.com](http://www.fire-extinguisher101.com)

**YOU LIGHT’EM, WE FIGHT’EM;  
YOU CRASH, WE DASH!**

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**DON’T LEARN SAFETY BY ACCIDENT!**