

# Home Fire Extinguishers

If you know how, and when, to use them, portable fire extinguishers can save lives and property.

## Fighting small fires

Portable home fire extinguishers can save lives and property by putting out small fires, or containing them until the fire department arrives ~ if you know how to use them.

### Before you fight a fire, make sure:

- ✚ Everyone has left and someone has called the fire department
- ✚ The fire is small, confined and not spreading
- ✚ You have a clear escape route
- ✚ Your extinguisher is right for the fire
- ✚ You know how to use the fire extinguisher

There are three common classes of fire. Extinguishers are labeled with standard symbols or letters for the classes of fire they can put out.



**Class A fires involve paper, wood and other ordinary combustibles.**



**Class B fires involve flammable liquids, such as oil, some paints, and gasoline.**



**Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment i.e. power tools, wiring, fuse boxes, appliances, TVs, computers, electric motors, etc.**

- ✓ An extinguisher labeled ABC may be used on all three classes of fire
- ✓ Extinguishers labeled only for Class A fires contain water and are dangerous if used on grease or electrical fires.
- ✓ A red slash through any symbol means you cannot use the extinguisher on that class of fire.
- ✓ A missing symbol means only that the extinguisher hasn't been tested for that class of fire.

### To operate your extinguisher, remember the word **PASS**

**P** - Pull the pin that unlocks the operating lever. (Some models may have other lever-release mechanisms.)

**A** - Aim low. Point the extinguisher nozzle or hose at the base of the fire.

**S** - Squeeze the lever above the handle to discharge the extinguishing agent. To stop the discharge, release the lever. (Some models may have a button instead of a lever.)

**S** - Sweep the nozzle or hose from side to side. Moving carefully toward the flames, keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep back and forth.

Once the fire goes out, watch the fire area and be prepared to repeat the process if the fire re-ignites.

***Call the fire department  
to inspect the fire site - even  
if you're sure you've  
extinguished the fire.***

### **Extinguisher Size**

Portable extinguishers are rated for the size of fire they can handle. Ratings appear on the label - for example, 2A:10B:C.

The larger the number, the bigger the fire the unit can handle. Bigger models are usually heavier. Be sure you can handle the extinguisher you buy.

### **Maintenance**

Inspect your extinguisher for damage and make sure it's fully charged once a month. (See manufacturer's instructions for details.)

Rechargeable extinguishers need to be serviced after each use. (See "Fire Extinguishers" in the Yellow Pages). Disposable units can be used only once.

