

Safety

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Training
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Fire safety: Do you know the basics?

■ Preventing and battling blazes in the workplace

The purpose of this session is to teach you how to prevent and respond to fire hazards.

What would you do?

If a fire broke out here, would you know what to do?

It's an important question to ask yourself. The way you respond to a fire emergency could mean the difference between life and death.

Preventing fires

First, let's talk about preventing fires. A few ways you can do it:

1. **Clean up.** Keep work areas free of waste paper and other combustibles to stop clutter from contributing to fires.
2. **Speak up.** If you notice faulty wiring or tools or equipment that are acting up, report it.
3. **Use chemicals wisely.** Follow the safety steps for using and storing flammable chemicals.
4. **Dispose of oily rags properly.** Put them in metal containers and throw them out the right way.
5. **Keep it clear.** Never block emergency exits or sprinklers with



boxes or pallets.

Dealing with fires

If there's a fire, what you do next depends on the type of fire it is.

You should never try to put out a big fire – i.e. a fire that's spreading and has high flames.

Instead, pull the fire alarm, alert your co-workers and evacuate the building, closing doors behind you. Then call 911.

If there's a small fire, remember: You should only attempt to fight the fire if you have a clear exit path.

If there's a clear exit path, grab an extinguisher and use the PASS technique:

- **Pull** the pin at the top of the extinguisher
- **Aim** at the base of the fire, not the flames
- **Squeeze** the lever slowly, then
- **Sweep** the extinguisher

from side to side until the fire is out.

Then monitor the area to make sure the fire is really extinguished.

Remember: It's crucial to work safely to prevent fires – and to know what to do if one occurs.

CLASSES OF FIRES

Class A fires are the most common fires. They happen when ordinary materials (wood, cloth, paper, etc) catch on fire.

Fighting Class A fires: These fires are the easiest to put out. Remove the heat, oxygen or fuel source of the fire. Then spray water on the fire or use an extinguisher.

Class B fires involve combustible liquid or gases. These fires involve a chemical reaction that makes them different from Class A fires.

Fighting Class B fires: Never use water to put out a Class B fire. Instead, use dry chemical extinguishing agents.

Class C fires are electrical fires that involve energized equipment. Examples: overloaded cables or equipment that catch fire.

Fighting Class C fires: While the fire is energized, it can be fought with an extinguishing agent rated for electrical fires or baking soda.

Class D fires involve flammable or combustible metals such as titanium or uranium.

Fighting Class D fires: Water and extinguishers can make combustible metal fires worse. Use dry agents like sodium chloride or graphite powder.

Training Session Quiz

NAME _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

1 A Class D fire can be extinguished with water or a fire extinguisher.

true false

2 If a big fire breaks out, you should immediately grab a fire extinguisher and try to fight it.

true false

3 The PASS method says you should pull, aim, squeeze and sweep the fire extinguisher while trying to put out a fire.

true false

4 You should never use water to put out a Class B fire because it could make the fire worse.

true false

5 You should put oily rags in the trash can as soon as you're done using them to help prevent a fire.

true false

6 When evacuating a building during a fire, it's best to close all doors behind you as you leave.

true false

7 The average fire extinguisher lasts for about 90 seconds.

true false

8 Baking soda can help put out electrical fires.

true false

9 It's never OK to use electrical equipment that smells weird or gives off a lot of heat.

true false

10 It's best to aim the fire extinguisher at the flames when trying to put out a fire.

true false

ANSWERS

1. *False.* Class D fires involve combustible metals that water can make even worse. You must use dry extinguishing agents to put out Class D fires.
2. *False.* You should only attempt to fight small fires – and you should never attempt to fight a fire without a clear exit path.
3. *True.* The PASS method is the easiest way to remember how to fight fires: Pull, aim, squeeze and sweep.
4. *True.* Dry chemical agents are the best way to put out energized fires. Water will only make things worse.
5. *False.* Oily rags should be put in closed metal containers, not thrown out with the regular garbage.
6. *True.* Closing the doors behind you as you evacuate can help keep the fire from spreading to other parts of the building.
7. *False.* The average fire extinguisher contains enough foam to last for about 15 seconds.
8. *True.* Baking soda is one way to put out electrical fires safely.
9. *True.* If the equipment is giving off strange smells or excess heat, that's a sign something is wrong and it could lead to a fire.
10. *False.* You should aim the fire extinguisher at the base of the fire. Aiming at the flames won't work.

MORE FACTS ABOUT FIRES



- The average fire extinguisher lasts for about 15 seconds.
- Never use electrical equipment that gives off unusual heat or smells odd. It's a sign something is wrong.
- Sweeping up scraps and dust from your work area frequently can reduce the chance there's a fire.
- Never use electrical equipment when flammable gases, vapors liquids dusts or fibers are present.
- Extension cords must be fully uncoiled before use to prevent a fire.