

8. Fire Extinguishers

The City of Mercer Island recognizes fire as a workplace hazard. To minimize potential damage from fires and to support fire suppression activities, the City authorizes all employees to use the portable fire extinguishers located throughout facilities to fight smaller fires.

In all scenarios where fire is identified, the first step is to call 911 to request fire services. Fire services must still be requested even if the fire appears fully extinguished to perform an onsite assessment.

Scope of Use

The efficacy of fire extinguishers is related to the amount of contained suppression material and their type. Refer to the following section for the types of fire extinguishers available in City vehicles and facilities and their uses.

Employees outside of fire service should not attempt to put out larger fires, which are those larger than an office trashcan fire. If fires are larger than an office trashcan, or grow beyond this size despite suppression efforts, staff should cease suppression efforts and evacuate the building. Supervisors are responsible for submitting a City Works service request ticket to ensure that all discharged fire extinguishers are examined immediately following their use.

Types of Fire Extinguishers

The following types of fire extinguishers are in City facilities and vehicles:

- **Class A** extinguishers are designed to extinguish fires involving ordinary combustible materials such as cloth, wood, paper, rubber, and many plastics.
- **Class B** extinguishers are designed to extinguish fires involving flammable and combustible liquids, such as gasoline, alcohol, oil-based paints, and lacquers.
- **Class C** extinguishers are designed to extinguish fires involving energized electrical equipment.
- **Class D** extinguishers are designed to extinguish fires involving combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, and sodium.
- **Class K** extinguishers are designed to extinguish fires involving vegetable oils, animal oils, or fats in commercial cooking appliances.

Multipurpose Extinguishers

Most portable extinguishers are rated for use with more than one classification of fire. For example, an extinguisher with a BC rating is suitable for use with fires involving flammable liquids and energized electrical equipment. An extinguisher with an ABC rating is suitable for use with fires involving ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids and energized electrical equipment. An extinguisher that is rated for use with multiple hazards should include a symbol for each hazard type.

Fire Extinguisher Servicing

All fire extinguishers will be serviced on a yearly basis. This includes examining for pitting, cracks, and corrosion. This servicing will be provided by the Fire Department.

Fire extinguishers should also be visually inspected monthly. This can be done during normal facility inspections. The inspection card attached to the extinguisher should be initialed to prove inspections took place. These visual inspections should ensure that the extinguisher is charged, has no visible defects,

appears capable of firing, and the pin is still in place. Facilities staff will be responsible for ensuring that fire extinguishers are inspected monthly in City facilities.

Fire Extinguisher Placement

Maintaining a close proximity of fire extinguishers in City facilities can reduce retrieval time in the event of a fire. All fire extinguishers shall be minimum size 2A rating. The travel distance between Class A fire extinguishers shall not exceed 75 feet in any one direction, and the travel distance between Class B & C extinguishers shall not exceed 50 feet in any one direction. An additional Class K fire extinguisher shall be in a conspicuous location near cooking equipment.

Training

Annually, the City is required to provide fire extinguisher training to familiarize employees with extinguisher operation and their capabilities. Training will include the following elements:

- What type of extinguishers to use depending on type of fire
- Operation of extinguishers (PASS method)
- Scope of use (when is a fire too large to fight)
- Inspection of fire extinguishers