FIRE EXTINGUISHER USE

Attempting to extinguish even a small fire carries some risk. Fires can increase in size and intensity in seconds, blocking the exit path of the fire fighter and creating a hazardous atmosphere. In addition, portable fire extinguishers contain a limited amount of extinguishing agent and can be discharged in a matter of seconds. **Therefore, individuals should attempt to fight only very small or incipient stage fires. Using a fire extinguisher is not a requirement. The only thing anyone is required to do is pull the Full Station to get everyone out.** You must call x5555 to report the use of a fire extinguisher.

Portable fire extinguishers have two functions:

1. To control or extinguish small or incipient stage fires and
2. To protect evacuation routes that a fire may block directly or indirectly

To extinguish a fire with a portable extinguisher a person:

- must have immediate access to the extinguisher,
- know how to actuate the unit,
- know how to apply the agent effectively, and
- perform a risk assessment that evaluates:
  1. the fire size,
  2. the atmosphere, and
  3. the evacuation path

<table>
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<th>Risk Assessment Question</th>
<th>Incipient stage fires or fires that can be extinguished with portable fire extinguishers</th>
<th>Fires that <strong>SHOULD NOT</strong> be fought with a portable fire extinguisher <strong>REQUIRES IMMEDIATE EVACUATION</strong></th>
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| Is the fire too big?     | 1. Limited to the original material ignited,  
                           2. It is contained and has not spread, and  
                           3. The flames are not higher than the firefighter’s head. | 1. The fire involves flammable solvents,  
                                                                                                                                                        2. Has spread over more than 60 square feet,  
                                                                                                                                                        3. Is partially hidden behind a wall or ceiling, or  
                                                                                                                                                        4. Can not be reached from a standing position. |
| Is the air safe to breathe? | 1. The fire has not depleted the oxygen in the room,  
                               2. No toxic gasses are being produced, and  
                               3. No respiratory protection is required. | 1. Due to smoke and products of combustion, the fire can not be fought without respiratory protection |
| Is the environment too hot or smoky? | 1. The room temperature is only slightly increased,  
                                         2. Smoke may be accumulating on the ceiling, but visibility is good, and  
                                         3. No special PPE is required. | 1. The radiated heat is easily felt on exposed skin making it difficult to approach within 10 – 15 feet of the fire,  
                                                                                                                                                        2. One must crawl on the floor due to heat or smoke, or  
                                                                                                                                                        3. Smoke is quickly filling the room decreasing visibility. |
| Is there a safe evacuation path? | There is a clear evacuation path that is behind you as you fight the fire. | The fire is not contained, and fire, heat, or smoke may block the evacuation path. |