

**FIRE DEPARTMENT  
INFORMATION BULLETIN**

**SUBJECT: PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

<p><b>Bulletin Number: 033</b> <b>Date of Issue: February 1, 1996</b> <b>Date Revised: January 1, 2008</b></p>
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<p><b>Code Reference:</b> <b>2008 California Fire Code, Chapter 9</b> <b>2008 California Building Code, Chapter 9</b> <b>Santa Rosa City Code 18-44</b> <b>Title 19 – California Health &amp; Safety Code</b></p>
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**NOTE:** This bulletin is a summary of Fire Department interpretations of city and State Codes. Information contained herein applies to typical instances and may not address all circumstances.

**TYPES OF FIRES:**

- Class A: Ordinary combustible materials such as wood, paper, cloth, rubber and many plastics.
- Class B: Flammable liquids, oils, greases, tars lacquer, oil base paints and flammable gases.
- Class C: Energized electrical equipment (when equipment is de-energized, the fire becomes a Class A and/or Class B.)
- Class D: Combustible metals such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, lithium and potassium.
- Class K: Fires in cooking appliances that involve combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal fats or oils)

**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

It is recommended that multi-purpose (ABC) fire extinguishers be used for all applications unless specifically noted otherwise. This type of extinguisher is inexpensive, easily serviced and effective on more types of fires.

Portable extinguishers shall be maintained in a fully charged and operable condition and kept in the designated places. They shall be conspicuously located where they are readily visible, preferably located along normal paths of travel. Extinguishers shall not be

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obstructed from view. Under circumstances where this cannot be avoided, means shall be provided to indicate their location.

Extinguishers having a gross weight not exceeding 40 pounds shall be installed so that the top of the extinguisher is not more than five (5) feet above the floor. Extinguishers weighing more than 40 pounds shall have their tops no more than 3-1/2 feet from the floor.

Extinguishers shall be provided for the protection of both the building structure (Class A) and the occupancy hazards within the structure (Class A, B, C, D, **or K**)

**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

Light Hazard

Occupancies such as offices, classrooms, churches, assembly halls and the like are considered light hazards. They shall be provided with one fire extinguisher, having a minimum rating of 2A10BC for each **3,000** square feet of floor area per floor. The travel distance from any point in a building to the nearest extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet.

Ordinary Hazard

Occupancies such as mercantile shops, light manufacturing research operations, auto showrooms, workshops and parking garages are considered ordinary hazards. They shall be protected by one minimum rated 2A10BC extinguisher for each **1,500** square feet of the floor area per floor. Travel distance from any point in the building to the nearest extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet.

Extra Hazard

Occupancies such as woodworking and vehicle repair shops or manufacturing processes utilizing flammable liquids are considered to be hazardous and shall be provided with a minimum rated 4A40BC fire extinguisher for each **1,000** square feet of floor area per floor. Travel distance from any point in the building to the nearest extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet.

Fire extinguishers with a Class K rating shall be provided for the hazards where there is a potential for fires involving combustible media (vegetable or animal fats or oils). Maximum travel distance shall not exceed thirty (30) feet from the hazard to the extinguisher.