



033: Firefighting

What your duties are

It is the job of the fire brigade or fire department to fight the fire “war.”

Your job is to fight the fire “battle,” so you can either prevent a war or escape if war is imminent.

Your job does not involve fighting a big fire with a little extinguisher until you pass out from smoke inhalation so that someone else has to go into the fire to pull you out...or notify your next of kin.

If a fire is growing despite your extinguisher efforts, make no further attempt to fight the fire. Focus on getting to the assembly area. If an alarm has not already sounded, notify others via a fire alarm pull station, phone, or whatever means you have.

Your equipment includes fire extinguishers, fire doors, fire alarms, fire escapes, and telephone, cell phone, or radio. It does not include fire hoses, unless you are on the fire brigade.

Fire extinguishers

You can easily douse a small fire and prevent a big one, if you respond quickly with a fire extinguisher.

You should note the location of fire extinguishers (and fire exits) as soon as you enter any given work area. Look for red stripes on columns or similar indications. Find the extinguisher and note its type. Typically, you will want a Type B or Type C, which both use an extinguishing gas. Check to see whether the extinguisher is fully charged or not. If not, notify your foreman so the work area can be made safe.

Do not use a Type A extinguisher (water) on fuel fires or electrical fires. It will merely spread the fire.

How to use an extinguisher

Note whether the extinguisher is charged or not. If it is not charged, find another extinguisher. If you can't tell, try the extinguisher.

Remove the extinguisher from its mounting bracket, holding it by the handle, and set it on the floor.

Remove the pin.

If you can't tell whether the unit is charged, give the handle a quick test squeeze. If you can tell it's charged, skip this step.

Approach the flame, pointing the fire extinguisher nozzle at the base. Then, pull the trigger and sweep the extinguisher from side to side to push the flame back at its base. If you aim high, you will not douse the fire.

Escaping

If you hear a fire alarm while in an equipment room, leave immediately. Rooms that contain generators often have automated fire doors that trap inside, and the extinguishing agent will asphyxiate you.

Your primary goal, in the event of a big fire, is to get out of the building and to an assembly area. If you don't smell smoke and can quickly shut off power to

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Obtain a fire extinguisher to demonstrate its use during the discussion portion. You will not need to actually put out a fire with it, but you may wish to arrange for that.

What this Safety Talk covers:

On-the-spot firefighting, prior to the arrival of the fire brigade or fire department.

Discussion notes :

