



“Your Connection for Workplace Safety”  
Phone: 920-208-7520

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## SCI Safety Tip: Fire Extinguishers

Source: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov>

Date: May 6, 2010

*Our Weekly Safety Tip provides valuable and current safety information relevant for Work, Home & Play.*

*And, you will be kept current on the latest Safety Compliance issues.*



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**Safety Slogan**

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**James Lehrke-SCI**

**Of the week**

The use of a fire extinguisher in the hands of a trained adult can be a life and property saving tool. However, a majority of adults have not had fire extinguisher training and may not know how and when to use them. Fire extinguisher use requires a sound decision making process and training on their proper use and maintenance.

### Should I Use a Fire Extinguisher?

Consider the following three questions before purchasing or using a fire extinguisher to control a fire:

#### 1. What type of fire extinguisher is needed?

Different types of fires require different types of extinguishers. For example, a grease fire and an electrical fire require the use of different extinguishing agents to be effective and safely put the fire out. Basically, there are five different types of extinguishing agents. Most fire extinguishers display symbols to show the kind of fire on which they are to be used.

#### Types of Fire Extinguishers

Class A extinguishers put out fires in ordinary combustible materials such as cloth, wood, rubber, paper, and many plastics.

Class B extinguishers are used on fires involving flammable liquids, such as grease, gasoline, oil, and oil-based paints.

Class C extinguishers are suitable for use on fires involving appliances, tools, or other equipment that is electrically energized or plugged in.

Class D extinguishers are designed for use on flammable metals and are often specific for the type of metal in question. These are typically found only in factories working with these metals.

Class K fire extinguishers are intended for use on fires that involve vegetable oils, animal oils, or fats in cooking appliances. These extinguishers are generally found in commercial kitchens, such as those found in restaurants, cafeterias, and caterers. Class K extinguishers are now finding their way into the residential market for use in kitchens.

There are also multi-purpose fire extinguishers - such as those labeled "B-C" or "A-B-C" - that can be used on two or more of the above type fires.

#### 2. Is the fire at a point where it might still be controlled by a fire extinguisher?

Portable fire extinguishers are valuable for immediate use on small fires. They contain a limited amount of extinguishing material and need to be properly used so that this material is not wasted. For example, when a pan initially catches fire, it may be safe to turn off the burner, place a lid on the pan, and use an extinguisher. By the time the fire has spread, however, these actions will not be adequate.

**Only trained firefighters can safely extinguish such fires.**

Use a fire extinguisher only if:

- You have alerted other occupants and someone has called the fire department;
- The fire is small and contained to a single object, such as a wastebasket;
- You are safe from the toxic smoke produced by the fire;
- You have a means of escape identified and the fire is not between you and the escape route; and
- Your instincts tell you that it is safe to use an extinguisher.

If all of these conditions are not present, you should NOT try to use a fire extinguisher. Alert other occupants, leave the building following your [home escape plan](#), go to the agreed upon meeting place, and call the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's home.

**3. Am I physically capable of using the extinguisher?**

Some people have physical limitations that might diminish or eliminate their ability to properly use a fire extinguisher. People with disabilities, older adults, or children may find that an extinguisher is too heavy to handle or it may be too difficult for them to exert the necessary pressure to operate the extinguisher.

**Maintenance**

Fire extinguishers need to be regularly checked to ensure that:

- The extinguisher is not blocked by furniture, doorways, or any thing that might limit access in an emergency.
- The pressure is at the recommended level. Some extinguishers have gauges that indicate when the pressure is too high or too low.
- All parts are operable and not damaged or restricted in any way. Make sure hoses and nozzles are free of insects or debris. There should not be any signs of damage or abuse, such as dents or rust, on the extinguisher.
- The outside of the extinguisher is clean. Remove any oil or grease that might accumulate on the exterior.

**Additionally:**

- Shake dry chemical extinguishers once a month to prevent the powder from settling or packing. Check the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Pressure test the extinguisher (a process called hydrostatic testing) after a number of years to ensure that the cylinder is safe to use. Find out from the owner's manual, the label, or the manufacturer when an extinguisher may need this type of testing.
- Immediately replace the extinguisher if it needs recharging or is damaged in any way.

**Sound Decision Making. Training. Maintenance.**

All are required to safely control a fire with an extinguisher. For this reason, **USFA recommends that only those trained in the proper use and maintenance of fire extinguishers consider using them when appropriate.** Contact your local fire department for information on training in your area.

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## SCI OSHA Compliance: OSHA Proposes 3-year Extension for Crane Operator Certification

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: February 21, 2014

OSHA has issued a proposed rule to extend the compliance date for its crane operator certification requirement by 3 years, to November 20, 2017. What's behind the move, and what does it mean for you? In August 2010, OSHA issued a final standard on requirements for cranes and derricks in construction work.

The standard requires crane operators on construction sites to meet one of four qualification/certification options by November 10, 2014. After OSHA issued the standard, a number of parties raised concerns about the requirements.

After conducting several public meetings, OSHA decided to extend the enforcement date so that the certification requirements do not take effect during potential rulemaking or cause disruption to the industry. The agency announced in May 2013 that it would formerly propose this change, which it has now done.

Other reasons for extending the deadline included feedback from industry representatives concerned that operator certification alone does not provide sufficient demonstration of competence. During the public meetings on the proposal, OSHA was advised that employers must make sure their employees are qualified by assessing the ability of operators to run cranes safely. Discussions also centered on whether to allow certifications based on the type of crane or on crane capacity as well.

### Current crane operator requirements

Until the certification requirements take effect, OSHA requires that:

- Employers must ensure that operators of cranes covered by the standard are competent to safely operate the equipment.
- When an employee assigned to operate machinery does not have the required knowledge or ability to operate the equipment safely, the employer must train that employee before operating the equipment and ensure that operators are evaluated to confirm that they understand the training content.

OSHA's final standard on requirements for cranes and derricks in construction required crane operators on construction sites to meet one of four qualification/certification options by 2014, which would be extended to 2017 under the latest proposal. Those options are:

- Certification by an accredited crane operator testing organization;
- Qualification by an audited employer program;
- Qualification by the U.S. military; *or*
- Licensing by a state or local government entity.

## HEALTHY BITES

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

PREVEA  
Health & Wellness

### Minerals

Minerals are important for your body to stay healthy. Your body uses minerals for many different jobs, including building bones, making hormones and regulating your heartbeat.

There are two kinds of minerals: macrominerals and trace minerals. Macrominerals are minerals your body needs in larger amounts. They include [calcium](#), phosphorus, magnesium, [sodium](#), [potassium](#), chloride and sulfur. Your body needs just small amounts of trace minerals. These include [iron](#), manganese, copper, iodine, zinc, cobalt, fluoride and selenium.



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*In Loving  
Memory of Jessica Lehrke*