ALABAMA MUNICIPAL INSURANCE CORPORATION
MUNICIPAL WORKERS COMPENSATION FUND, INC.
Loss Control Division

USING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Date:_____ Time: _____Department:_____ Person Conducting:_____

Meeting Objective; To educate employees about the different types of fires and fire extinguishers; and to instruct employees in the correct usage of fire extinguishers.

INTRODUCTION

A fire needs three elements to occur

1. Heat - Heat can come from many sources. It can be generated by sparks from welding operations, discarded cigarette butts, electrical shorts, frayed wiring, friction from power tools and hot exhaust pipes.
2. Fuel - Fuel may be liquid, such as gasoline or solvents; solid, such as paper or wood scraps; or a gas, such as propane.
3. Oxygen - *Oxygen is* present ***in*** the air around us.

These three elements together are known as the fire triangle. Removing any of these elements will cause a fire to extinguish itself. Fire extinguishers are effective on small fires. The extinguisher agents work by removing heat, fuel or oxygen and interrupting the *chemical* chain reaction. Not *all* fire extinguishers are designed to do the same job and using the wrong extinguisher can make a bad situation worse. Care must be taken to use the correct fire extinguisher. Fire extinguisher selection is based on the class of fire.

TYPES OF FIRES AND FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

There are four main types, or classes of fires and five types of fire extinguishers.

1. Class A - These are for ordinary combustibles like wood chips, paper, clothing and trash that *do not* contain flammable substances like gasoline, solvents or some other chemicals. Class A extinguishers use water or water-based liquid, foam or dry chemicals. Using a class A extinguisher on fires involving flammable liquids or electricity might not be effective and could be dangerous.

   Class A extinguishers have numbers like 1-A, 2-A and so on. The numbers indicate how large a fire fee extinguisher *can* handle. A 2-A extinguisher handles twice as large a fire as a 1 -A.

2. Class B - These are for fires involving flammable liquids like gasoline, oil, solvents, paint and grease. They contain carbon dioxide, foam or dry chemicals. They work by cutting off the supply of oxygen and smothering a fire.

   Class B extinguishers also have numbers to show how large a fire they can handle, bat the numbering system is different from that of Class A. In the Class B system, a 5-B can handle a 5-square foot fire; a 10-B can handle a 10-square foot fire, and so on.

3. Class C - These are for fires involving electricity and/or electrical equipment. They use carbon dioxide or dry chemicals to smother a fire.

4. Class D - These extinguishers are designed to be used on fires involving combustible metals such as sodium magnesium, powdered aluminum and zinc. They should be available in operations that generate these types of metal powders, shavings or flakes.

5. Combination Classes - Such as 'ABC' or 'BC'. These extinguishers are designed to fight any combination of the first three types of fires discussed.

IDENTIFYING AK EXTINGUISHER

Fire extinguishers are identified by letters and color coded symbols on the faceplate. These symbols indicate their classification as follows:
Class A - Green triangle;
Class B - red square;
Class C - blue circle; and
Class D - yellow star.

Combination class extinguishers will have multiple letters and symbols. Class A and B extinguishers will have the numerical ratings discussed previously.

USING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

When using a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASSE to guide you through each step. PASSE stands for Pull. Aim, Squeeze, Sweep, and evacuate,
1. Pull the pin- Some extinguishers require releasing *a* lock latch or pressing a puncture lever.

2. Aim low. Point the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire.

3. Squeeze the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright. This action releases the extinguishing agent.

4. Sweep from side to side. Keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep back and forth until the fire is out.

5. Evacuate. All persons not directly engaged in fire suppression should be evacuated from the building. Spectators are just in the way.

Show the major parts of a fire extinguisher to employees: pin, hose, trigger, and label. Advise employees of the location of fire extinguishers at your workplace. Show employees how to safely remove extinguishers from wall mounts. Discuss the location of combustible and flammable materials in your workplace, and what types of fires might occur at various locations. Remember to advise employees that a decision about calling the fire department should be made prior to squeezing an extinguisher trigger. Do not wait until all fire extinguishers are expended to advise the fire department of your situation.

SIGNATURES OF ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE

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