SAFETY FEEDBACK NOTICE

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

DGEP / HSE

Ref: 03 - 2009

Issued on 22/04/09

Most frequent anomalies

More than 250 anomalies and incidents related to portable fire extinguishers have been recorded in the Synergi data base over the period from Q1-2008 until Q2-2009. One incident was classified with human potential gravity 4 (burst of fire extinguisher while charging pressure: synergi case n°195724).

Installation

- Fire extinguisher blocked on its stand or badly installed,
- No fire extinguisher available where/when it is required,

- Inspection not performed or expired, fire extinguisher not certified.
- Fire extinguisher found with low pressure.

Maintenance

- Nozzles or hoses damaged or missing,
- Fire extinguisher found corroded.
- Operating instructions or servicing record labels, not properly placed or damaged or missing,

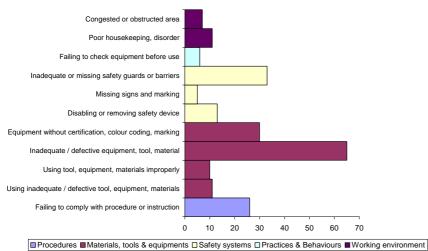
Operation and Use

- Emergency extinguisher used for stand-by during hot work,
- Operators unable to use portable fire extinguisher.



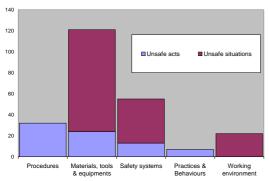
The causes of the incidents, as reported in the Synergi data base are the following:

Immediate Causes

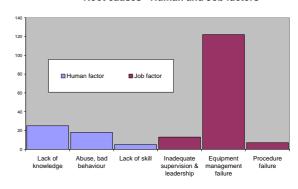




Immediate Causes - Unsafe acts / Unsafe situations



Root causes - Human and Job factors



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The GS EP SAF 311 "Rules for the selection of fire fighting systems" defines the type of fire protection systems, including portable extinguishers, to be installed.

The NFPA 10 norm "Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers", 2007 Edition, applies for the selection, installation, inspection, servicing and testing of portable extinguishing equipment.

In addition, the following recommendations should be considered as guidance for inspecting, maintaining and using portable fire extinguishers on TOTAL E&P installations.

Inspection

- Extinguishers shall be visually inspected when initially installed, then on a monthly basis or after each use,
- Periodic inspection should include at least:
 - verification of device presence in designated places (usually along current pathways, at areas exits, etc...),
 - verification of devices visibility and of access to them; if not easily visible, there should be means to indicate extinguishers location (panels, arrows, maps, ...),
 - verification of the pressure gauge indication (if applicable): device to be quickly maintained if abnormal pressure,
 - verification of tires, wheels, carriage, hose and nozzle condition for wheeled extinguishers,
- Recharge and inspection records to be kept updated: any new data to be mentioned on a tag or label attached to the fire extinguisher.



Servicing

- Fire extinguishers shall be maintained after each use, and/or whenever an inspection points out an anomaly (corrosion, lack of pressure, ...); the duration between two servicing operations should never be longer than one year,
- Servicing should include at least a thorough examination of the basic elements (mechanism, physical appearance, visible
 damage, corrosion, nozzle blockage, operating instructions and recharge and inspection record legibility) and a function
 test before recharging; dry chemical extinguishers will be rotated upside down in order to shake the powder,
- Servicing and recharging shall be performed by trained and certified personnel with proper tools and following the manufacturer's service manual; recharging material and spare parts shall be those specifically listed by the manufacturer,
- Pressure testing shall be performed by trained personnel according to dedicated procedures and using appropriate testing equipment and facilities,
- When the servicing is performed by a contracted third party, the affiliate should guarantee the quality of the services, hence the extinguishers availability, by appropriate actions such as specific quality contractual clauses, dedicated supervision, audits on service, targeted tests on equipment after service, etc...

Operation

Portable fire extinguishers are intended as the first line of defense to fight limited size fires. Their efficiency relies on the following essential and compulsory elements:

- > **Selection**: the type of extinguisher installed at a given position corresponds to the potential hazards of the area hence to the types of fire likely to occur; each permanent personnel should know the extinguishers locations over the entire installation,
- > **Identification**: each personnel should be familiar with the contents and the purpose of each type of extinguisher, which is permanently marked on the body of each of them.
- Moving: extinguishers should always be easily accessible and removable from their stand. There should be no limitation to their moving, which should always be easy for all the personnel (weight, size),
- > Actuation: each permanent personnel must have been trained to the proper and efficient use of each type of extinguisher available on the installation,

The permanent extinguishers of the installation are dedicated to emergency situations, hence should never be used or relied on for stand-by during programmed tasks such as hot works.

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