



Fire Prevention and Safety

Many of the materials we use on a daily basis are flammable. Without the proper safety precautions a fire can break out unexpectedly. To help keep you safe, we will review some key fire prevention guidelines, specifically those covering flammable materials and portable heater use and storage. In addition, we will discuss basic fire extinguisher guidelines.

Flammable Materials Storage

All flammable materials must be stored and disposed of properly. Materials such as oil or paint-soaked rags can be fire hazards if they are not thrown away properly. Use these guidelines when handling flammable materials.

Consider all gases and liquids flammable unless their label specifically states otherwise. Remember: flammable liquids and gases can ignite when exposed to open flames, sparks, or excessive heat. For this reason, flammable liquids and gases should not be stored within 20 feet of oxygen cylinders or fuel.

Storage areas for flammable materials must contain “No Smoking” signs, and anyone in these areas must not smoke. Finally, all oil or paint-soaked rags must be disposed of in closed metal containers.

The best way to prevent fires is by practicing good housekeeping. Make sure all garbage and debris are put in the proper containers. Also, make sure the lids on closed containers stay in place. If you notice any possible fire hazards in your workplace, talk to your supervisor immediately.

Portable Heating Systems

Portable heaters are another potential cause of fires. If you use these heaters or work in an area where they are present make sure you follow these guidelines:

- Do not operate portable heaters while on Ahern property during non-working hours.
- Make sure there is adequate ventilation.
- Make sure there are no hazardous chemicals in the area.
- Keep combustible materials away from the heater.
- Make sure there is a portable fire extinguisher within 10 feet of the heater.

If you have any questions about using portable heaters talk to your supervisor. When using these heaters always consider the location of combustible materials and ensure there is adequate ventilation.

Fire Extinguishers

If a fire starts, it is important to understand a few fire extinguisher basics. First, know where fire extinguishers are located. OSHA requires all extinguishers to be highly visible and accessible. If the extinguisher is not visible, signs must be used to indicate where the extinguisher is located. In addition, the areas in front of and below the fire extinguisher must be clear at all times.

Your fire extinguishers are inspected monthly for

- Proper placement

- Visibility
- Accessibility
- Rating
- Pressure level
- Physical condition

If you have any concerns about the fire extinguishers at your location talk to your supervisor.

There are several different types of fire extinguishers available. This is because different materials cause different kinds of fires. Always make sure you are using the correct fire extinguisher if you are attempting to fight a fire.

Class A fires involve combustible materials such as wood, cloth, paper, trash, rubber and plastic.

Class B fires involve flammable liquids such as oil, grease, oil-based paint and flammable gas.

Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment such as motors and appliances. If the electrical equipment is de-energized, a Class A or B extinguisher can be used to fight the fire.

Class D fires involve combustible metals such as potassium, sodium and magnesium.

Remember, you should only use a fire extinguisher if:

- The fire can be controlled by a fire extinguisher
- You can locate the fire extinguisher quickly
- You can escape if the fire spreads
- You are qualified to use the fire extinguisher

For safety reasons, make sure someone else knows you are trying to put out the fire. Always activate the fire alarm or call the fire department before attempting to fight the fire.

Finally, make sure you are prepared beforehand in case a fire starts. Be aware of all exits and entrances at your location. Know where to meet during an emergency situation. If you have any questions about emergency preparedness, talk to your supervisor.

The best way to fight fires is prevention. Make sure you follow all the guidelines for storing flammable materials and ensure portable heaters are used properly. Be prepared in case a fire does start. Follow the fire extinguisher guidelines outlined here.

If you have any additional questions about fire prevention, call the Director of Risk at (702) 368-6793.

Revision History

Rev.	Date	Change Description & Section	Approver/Contributor/Writer
002	June 4, 2009	Upped revision for 2009 release; no content changes.	Megan Gesing
001	June 2, 2008	Initial Release.	Rene Casas/Abby Rotstein