



TDCJ Risk Management's  
*Training Circular*

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Risk Management Issues

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# October Fire Prevention



Often when people think of fire safety the first thing that comes to mind is usually fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. Rather than focusing primarily on what to do in the event of a fire, first we must understand how to keep fire from happening.

### PREVENTION IS KEY!

The best form of fire protection is prevention. Eliminating the probability of a fire reduces the chance of loss.

### Inspections

When properly utilized, inspections are an effective method of eliminating hazards and an educational opportunity for employees and offenders.

Regular and periodic inspections can identify fire hazards and unsafe practices that may pose a threat to the safety of individuals within a specific area. There are some simple areas to focus attention when conducting a fire safety inspection.

**Housekeeping**  
Housekeeping is one of the easiest forms of fire prevention. Look to see how combustibles, or things that burn, are being stored in each area. Don't allow unnecessary paper to build up and ensure there is a process in place for regular waste disposal. Store excess materials and equipment out of the range of fire exits to prevent blocking or tripping.

Do not store materials in such a manner that would block sprinkler heads, fire suppression equipment, or emergency lights.

### Chemicals

Flammable liquids should only be stored in approved containers. Chemicals with a flash point less than 100 degrees must be stored in an approved flammable storage cabinet. Never store com-



bustibles inside or on top of flammable storage cabinets. If flammable liquids and substances are present in the workplace, look to see if the chemical is actually needed to perform the work required, if so try to identify any non-flammable alternatives.

**Open Flames**  
No open flames should be produced near flammable materials. The use of candles is prohibited.



### Electrical Hazards

Electrical circuits should not be overloaded. Use only appropriate 3-wire extension cords and plug them directly into an outlet. Never "piggy-back" or "daisy chain" extension cords and power strips.

If electrical equipment or

cords feel hot, unplug them and discontinue their use until cleared by an electrician. Appliances should be in the "OFF" position when unattended.

**Report hazards in the workplace to a supervisor. Do not use equipment that is unsafe.**

## AWARENESS

Fire safety and prevention awareness is one of the most crucial components to a fire safety program.

Knowing how to identify fire hazards before they result in a fire can save lives and serious property damage or loss. Frequent functional and tabletop fire and evacuation drills will ensure all effected individuals are familiar with their roles and responsibilities, as well as safe evacuation procedures in the event of an actual emergency.

## HAVE A PLAN

Each facility should have a site specific fire plan to address issues such as fire evacuation, fire suppression, and emergency notification. Posting evacuation routes conspicuously throughout the workplace communicates to staff and visitors evacuation routes to areas of safe refuge. Training should be conducted at least annually in the prevention of fires, fire preparedness

procedures, facility fire plan, fire evacuations, fire drill procedures, and fire suppression.

## FIRE ALARMS

Know where manual pull stations are located in your workplace. Never assume a sounding alarm is just a drill.



## FIRE DRILLS

It is to be understood that the purpose of fire drills in offender living areas is to ensure that assigned staff understand their duties and responsibilities, that the emergency key system is functional, that locks and doors are operational, and any concerns or deficiencies are addressed.

Fire drills shall be run in all housing areas at least once per quarter per shift.

All other areas are to include administrative departments and leased offices, should run drills at least quarterly.

## EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Be familiar with fire evacuation procedures. Also familiarize yourself with the primary and secondary evacuation routes in your work area.

Know the unit/department process for obtaining emergency keys if applicable.

Know where fire suppression equipment is located and understand their use in the event it is needed to assist with the evacuation process.

Each shift/department should have a means for accounting for all persons in their respective areas.

Have someone designated to notify local emergency response.

Never assume an activated alarm or fire evacuation is a drill.

**Don't be a hero.**

## FIRE TYPES

Fires are chemical reactions that occur when fuel, oxygen, and an ignition source combine.

**Class A:** Involves the burning of paper, cloth, wood or plastics, etc. (solids that are not metal)



**Class B:** Flammable liquids, such as gasoline, oils, or other flammable gasses



**Class C:** Electrical current or electrical devices



sizes. Normally these will be 5 -10 pound fire extinguishers found in various locations. Can be used on Class A, B, and C fires.

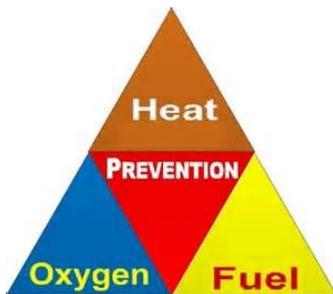
**Class K:** Kitchen (i.e. cooking oils) – to only be used after suppression system discharges. Posting for this type of extinguisher are required in areas where they may be used.



**Class "K" Kitchen Fire Extinguishers** – Wet chemical fire extinguishers for use with kitchen appliances. Discharges a fine mist that helps prevent grease splash and fire re-lash while cooling the appliance. This type of fire suppression equipment shall only be used after the existing cooking equipment automatic system protection has been discharged.

### BE FIRE SMART!

When dealing with fires, it is extremely important to know the different types of fires and the appropriate type of extinguisher required for each fire type.

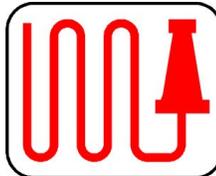


### TYPES OF FIRE SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT

Fire suppression equipment works by removing one or more of the three elements of fire: Fuel, Oxygen, or Heat.

**Multi-purpose "ABC" Dry Chemical Fire Extinguishers** – come in many different

**Standpipe Hose** – is mounted on a hose reel in a fixed location on TDCJ units, on the wall of a dormitory, department, or on a cellblock run. Hard rubber hose that sprays a fog or straight stream pattern of water. Only to be used on Class A fires.

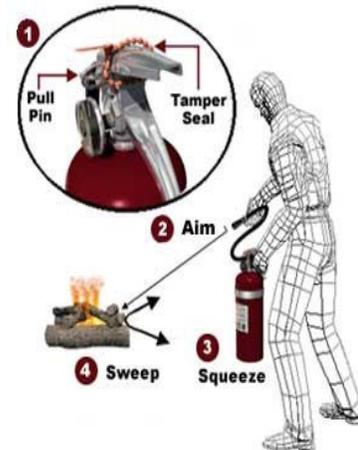


**Hose Cabinet** – containing a soft rubber hose, usually found in administrative areas. The hose is folded in loops and must be pulled from the rack entirely to remove kinks before turning on the water. Only to be used on Class A fires.

The following steps should be followed when responding to incipient stage fire ( when they are small and controllable with

fire extinguishers):

- Sound the fire alarm and call the fire department, if appropriate.
- Identify a safe evacuation path before approaching the fire. Do not allow the fire, heat, or smoke to come between you and your evacuation path.
- Select the appropriate type of fire extinguisher.
- Discharge the extinguisher within its effective range using the **P.A.S.S.** technique (pull, aim, squeeze, sweep).



- Back away from an extinguished fire in case it flames up again.
- Evacuate immediately if the extinguisher is empty and the fire is not out.

Evacuate immediately if the fire progresses beyond the incipient stage.

## USING FIRE EXTINGUISHERS (P.A.S.S)

**P**ull pin – this allows you to activate the extinguisher

**A**im – hold hose and point at base of fire

**S**queeze – the trigger mechanism to release the agent

**S**weep – back and forth at the base of the fire



## FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSPECTION

1. Is each extinguisher in its designated place, clearly visible, and not blocked by equipment, coats, or other objects that could interfere with access during an emergency?
2. Is the nameplate with operating instructions legible and facing outward?
3. Is the pressure gauge showing that the extinguisher is fully charged (the needle should be in

- the green zone)?
4. Is the pin and tamper seal intact?
5. Is the extinguisher in good condition and showing no signs of physical damage, corrosion, or leakage?
6. Have all dry powder extinguishers been gently rocked top to bottom to make sure the powder is not packing?
- 7.

## NOTE:

**If you did not answer yes to all of these questions, have the extinguisher fixed or replaced**

## IMMEDIATELY!

## HOT WORK

Any time welding, grinding, or other types of work that produce a flame or spark is performed outside an approved hot work area, a Hot Work Permit is required.

Ensure there is an appropriate fire extinguisher available for the work being performed.

After any hot work is completed, a fire watch must be implemented for a time of no less than 30 minutes to ensure a fire does not start due to the hot work.

**Remember, Safety Does Not Happen By Accident!**

## References:

TDCJ Risk Management Program Manual



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