

Fire Extinguishers

We all have one (or should) but yet we don't give them much attention. That said, they don't need much attention. Try to take a look at them once a month. Check the gauge to ensure that there is pressure in the extinguisher. The needle should be in the green.



It is very important to keep your fire extinguisher handy. They tend to get stored someplace out of the way, but over time, can become buried behind other household items. In a home, it is not recommended to keep them in the kitchen, even though that is where most residential fires occur. Fire extinguishers should always be stored near an exit. This ensures that you have an exit behind you and do not get trapped by the fire.

The fire extinguisher shown here is an ABC type extinguisher. This is the most common extinguisher and is recommended that all homeowners have.

The larger the fire extinguisher, the more fire it will extinguish. However, larger fire extinguishers are also heavier. If you are unable to lift or handle it, you may not be able to use it when you need it most. When purchasing a fire extinguisher, be sure to get a size that you can handle.

A very common question that we get at the fire station is what to do with old fire extinguishers. If yours has a pressure gauge, and the needle is in the green, even if the extinguisher is 10+ years old it still may be good. If you are unsure how old your extinguisher is, or if it still works, you should replace it. You have to have confidence in your extinguisher if you are going to use it on a fire. The State of Minnesota and Rice County consider fire extinguishers as Household Hazardous Waste (HHW). This is due to the pressure inside the extinguisher. If the pressure is no longer present, then there is no hazard to an unsuspecting person handling the extinguisher. Ideally, if the fire extinguisher still has pressure inside but you want to dispose of it, it should be taken out to the landfill and dropped off, free of charge. If the fire extinguisher is empty and unpressurized, it can be put in the trash or recycled.

