

# High-Rise Fire Safety

## Outline For a Floor Warden Training Program

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## **Purpose:**

To ensure that high-rise floor wardens are knowledgeable about their duties and responsibilities of fire prevention and emergency response in the workplace.

## **Objectives:**

Business should:

1. Develop a fire and life safety emergency plan: see "Fire & Life Safety Emergency Operations Guide." (Required in some businesses)
2. Provide annual training for floor wardens.

Floor wardens should be able to:

1. Describe the emergency procedures for the facility in case of fire, bomb threat etc.
2. Identify common fire hazards in the workplace and how to prevent them.
3. Describe the role of floor wardens in the evacuation process.
4. Identify special situations or individuals in the workplace that may require an emergency response different than the standard response (i.e. evacuating instructions for physically impaired persons).
5. Describe the basic operation of building fire and life safety systems as they relate to the emergency evaluation process.
6. Demonstrate how to correctly use a fire extinguisher.

## **Materials:**

- Your building's fire and life safety emergency plan.
- Brochures obtained from Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R), high-rise safety, responsibilities of floor wardens, fire response checklist for floor wardens.
- Videos checked out from PF&R such as "Get Out Alive" and "Fire Extinguisher Safety".

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Keeping the interest of staff members during fire safety training can be a challenge – especially when you are reviewing information which employees have received in the past. Involving employees in the program is a good way to maintain their interest, while increasing their knowledge level on fire and life safety. Also, try limiting the program to less than 60 minutes in length.

## **Getting Started:**

- Review the employees' objectives.
- Make sure all floor wardens have a copy of your facility's written fire and life safety emergency plan and the fire response checklist for floor wardens.
- View "Get Out Alive." This video provides information on the dangers from fire and gives a realistic impression of how fire starts and the speed with which fire grows. Points to make with this video include:

1. The importance of knowing the fire and life safety emergency plan.
  2. The importance of becoming familiar with your emergency procedures before you need to follow them.
  3. The need to react quickly whenever a fire is discovered or the alarm sounds.
- Explain the staff positions and responsibilities of the fire and life safety team. These include the Fire and Life Safety Director, the Building Response Team, Floor Wardens, Assistance Monitors and any other emergency personnel assigned. Then, introduce the Fire and Life Safety Director to the Floor Wardens so that they know who is in charge during an emergency until the Fire Bureau arrives.
  - Discuss your building's engineered fire and life safety systems. Does everyone know what and where they are, and how they work? Which of the following does your building have, and what is their importance in a fire: smoke detectors, manual pull alarms, stairwells, fire doors, alarm systems, sprinklers, stairwell pressurization and emergency lighting?
  - Review *Choosing Floor Wardens* (see page 6 of this guide) for duties and procedures to be followed for persons unable to use exit stairs.
  - Review the actions to be taken if an employee discovers a fire. Stress the need for the quick alerting of floor occupants, rapid evacuation and the importance of calling **9-1-1** immediately. Review the information to be relayed when calling to report an alarm.
  - Review the actions to take if a person is unable to evacuate during a fire. Cover seeking an area of refuge, fire survival behaviors to follow, and how to protect yourself in place.

**USE THE FOLLOWING SCENARIOS TO STIMULATE DISCUSSION ON  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:**

1. One hour into your shift, the fire alarm activates. Describe what you may be doing at that time and how you would react to the alarm. What would be the first thing you would do? Would you evacuate? Where to and by what route? Where would your meeting place be?
2. You discover a fire in your work area that is already too big to try and extinguish. Describe what your reaction would be, what your response would be and in what order?
3. Are there special situations in your facility that you need to be aware of in case of a fire emergency? Describe any special situations that would require a response other than that generally described for staff (non-ambulatory individuals, customers or visitors unfamiliar with evacuation procedures, patients with special medical needs, etc.).

- Hold a fire drill at the conclusion of your program to practice your building escape plan. Providing treats as an incentive may help raise interest.

## Fire Extinguisher Use and Safety:

- Provide an example of each type of fire extinguisher in your building.
- Distribute fire extinguisher handouts to each employee.
- Show the video, "Fire Extinguisher Safety" (12 minutes).
- Discuss the types of fire extinguishers found in your building; their location, how to access them, and the types of fires on which they would (or would not) be used.
- Identify the parts of the extinguishers. Pass them around, so that everyone can identify and familiarize themselves with handling them.



**\*\*\*NOTE:** Personal safety and the safety of others are the most important factors when deciding whether or not to fight a small fire. Before you begin to fight a fire, be sure of the following:

- Everyone has left, or is leaving, the building.
- PF&R has been called or is being called. Even if you succeed in putting out the fire, it should be inspected. IT'S THE LAW...all fires are to be reported.
- The fire is confined to a small area, such as in a wastebasket, and it is not spreading (getting bigger). A portable fire extinguisher is no match for a large or rapidly advancing fire.
- Your back is towards an unobstructed exit, to which the fire will not spread. You must always assume that you may not be able to extinguish the fire you are fighting. If the fire doesn't diminish with your first attack, or if anything goes wrong, leave immediately and do not return.
- The room is not filled with smoke. Firefighters wear protective breathing equipment, because of the dangers of smoke inhalation. Without protection, you may quickly find yourself unable to breathe or see.

It is reckless to fight a fire in any other circumstances. If in doubt, leave immediately; close off the area to slow the spread of fire and smoke, and assist others to the designated meeting place.

## Hands-On Training:

- If you have extra fire extinguishers available (ones not required for building protection), floor wardens can practice discharging them in an open outdoor area. A garbage can makes a good target and will help contain extinguishing agent if a dry chemical powder is used. Since dry chemical powder can be corrosive to some metals when combined with water, care should be taken not to use it near cars or other equipment. Each person should take a turn pulling the pin, aiming the extinguisher low at the base of the fire, squeezing the handle, and applying the agent in a sweeping motion. Just a few seconds of discharging the extinguisher gives each person a feel for the real thing. Usually, several people can use one extinguisher before it is fully discharged.

## Instructor Information

### High-Rise Complexity:

High-rise fires are more complex than several other occupancies because of:

1. The high numbers of people occupying the building.
2. The distances they must travel to evacuate.
3. The buildings' large size, both area and height.
4. The physical challenges to firefighters in reaching the fire.

Because of these factors, well-trained staff and volunteers are vital to the proper handling of a fire emergency.

### Major Causes of Fire:

The major causes of fires in high rise buildings are smoking materials, electrical, flammable liquids (such as organic oils/solvents used in remodeling), and arson.

### Building Fire and Life Safety Systems:

Prior to your program, become familiar with your facility's fire and life safety systems. Know which of the following your business has, as well as their location and use:

|                           |                    |                              |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Manual pull alarms        | Fire doors         | Smoke detectors              |
| Fire extinguishers        | Emergency phones   | Sprinklers                   |
| Exit doors and stairwells | Voice alarm system | Pressurized shafts           |
| Heat detectors            | Alarm monitoring   | Pressurization/Smoke Control |

### Emergency Evacuation Procedures:

It is important for your high rise to have updated emergency evacuation procedures for tenants. This can be a simple one-page handout or part of a handbook on building emergency procedures. All building occupants should receive a copy of this information, including those who work weekends and nights. In addition, PF&R requires that each high rise building maintain a Fire & Life Safety Emergency Plan. This more formal document details the functions and responsibilities of building staff and floor wardens during a fire emergency. It also serves as an informational resource to firefighters on the building layout and emergency systems during an emergency.

A copy of this document is to be filed with the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO), and another copy is kept at the building's Emergency Control Center.

### **Controlled Evacuation with a Zoned Alarm System:**

The majority of high rise buildings have zoned alarm systems. This means the alarm will ring on only a few floors in the direct vicinity of the fire. The minimum numbers of floors that must go into alarm are the fire floor and one floor above and one floor below. Recommended evacuation instructions for a high-rise building with zoned alarm systems are for those persons on a floor where the alarm is sounding: enter the exit stairwell, go down 4 floors, and re-enter the building - unless the alarm is sounding on this floor also. This controlled method is used instead of evacuating the entire building at once. The reason for this controlled evacuation is threefold:

1. Initial evacuation is limited to those people in the direct vicinity of the fire. Because of building construction features, occupants on more distant floors may not need to evacuate.
2. The time necessary for a complete evacuation of a high-rise building may be extended. This is due, in part, to the large number of building occupants. If evacuation is not controlled, backups are likely in the stair wells, and the opportunities for injuries or panic are increased.
3. The majority of high rise buildings have pressurized stairwell shafts. When the building alarm system is activated, fans pump air into the stair and elevator shafts to create areas of high pressure. This pressurization helps keep smoke from entering the stairwells and keeps them clear for evacuation. Closed stairwell doors are critical for maintaining this high pressure. If evacuation is not controlled (i.e. if all stairwell doors are opened at once by everyone exiting), the pressure is lost and smoke may enter the stairwells, making evacuation hazardous.

Occupants of high rise buildings should always be instructed to evacuate downward, never up to the roof. Although roof rescues may look dramatic in the movies, in reality it is a very dangerous place to be during a fire.

### **Choosing Floor Wardens:**

The primary role of floor wardens is to facilitate the evacuation of occupants from the floor during a fire alarm. Floor wardens are on the front lines of emergency response when a fire occurs. Their quick actions, clear thinking and calm leadership are vital to ensuring the safety of building occupants during a fire emergency. Floor wardens should be chosen with these considerations in mind. It is recommended that each floor have at least two floor wardens. Additional floor wardens may be necessary, depending on the building and/or occupants.

Floor wardens should exhibit a concern for others, be able to handle pressure well, and have an assertive "take control" attitude. They should receive training at least once a year.

It is imperative that every alarm is treated as though it is a real emergency, even if the initial source is unknown. If the alarm sounds or a fire is suspected, call **9-1-1** immediately. After calling, if you determine that there is no fire, but rather a malfunction of your equipment or a false alarm, call **9-1-1** and relay this information. Never wait to investigate the situation before notifying **9-1-1**. Any delay will allow a fire to grow and further endanger the building occupants and property.

DO NOT silence the alarm until given permission to do so by PF&R personnel or by the emergency operator.

DO NOT reset the alarm until PF&R arrives and has investigated the source of the alarm. All fire alarms are to be investigated by PF&R.

Whenever you need the assistance of police, fire or emergency medical personnel, you only need to remember one phone number: **9-1-1**. It's important for employees calling **9-1-1** to be able to give the following information: nature of the problem, location, address, nearest cross-street and any specifics known. The caller should not hang up until told to do so by the emergency operator.

Close doors when exiting. By closing doors, you help limit the spread of smoke and fire throughout the building. Doors should be closed by employees as they leave, and by floor wardens assigned to check the floor during an alarm.

Elevators should never be used by building occupants during a fire emergency. The reason is three-fold:

1. Elevators often fail during a fire, trapping occupants.
2. Elevator shafts may fill with smoke.
3. The elevator needs to be available for the use of arriving firefighters.

Occupants must exit by way of stairwells only. For information on evacuation procedures for non-ambulatory persons, refer to the *Fire Evacuation Procedures for Persons Unable to Use Exit Stairwells* found in the PF&R *Emergency Operations Guide*, or call the Public Education Office/Fire & Life Safety Program at 503-823-3700.

It is important to establish an employee meeting place so that all employees can be accounted for after a building evacuation. The meeting place needs to be away from the building, both so that the area is clear for arriving PF&R personnel and also so that occupants are away from any glass or debris that may fall from the building.

If unable to leave the building, create an area of refuge:

- Seal the room. Use wet cloth to stuff around cracks in doors and seal up vents to protect against smoke.
- Do not break windows. Flames and smoke can come back in from the outside. If you need air, open the window a crack.
- Stay low under the smoke. The freshest air is near the floor. Keep a wet cloth over your nose and mouth; breathe through your nose only.
- Signal for help. Use the telephone, or hang something in the window.

Fire code requirements specify the size, number and location of fire extinguishers within your facility. These requirements help establish a protection level appropriate for the hazard class of your building. Make sure you know the types, sizes and maintenance requirements of your extinguishers, as well as the basics of extinguisher operation.

The Public Education Section of the Fire Prevention Division provides assistance in evacuation planning, as well as resources for training staff and building residents. Call the Public Education Office during business hours at 503-823-3700.

**Thank you for taking responsibility for the safety of your facility and its residents!**

**YOUR SAFETY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

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## **Duties of Floor Wardens:**

The primary role of floor wardens, as required by PF&R, is to facilitate the evacuation of occupants from the floor during a fire alarm. Floor wardens are on the front lines of emergency response when a fire occurs. Their quick actions, clear thinking and calm leadership are vital to ensuring the safety of building occupants during a fire emergency.

### **1. Alert Occupants and Facilitate Evacuation**

Upon activation of the alarm, floor wardens should quickly tour the floor and alert all occupants that a fire alarm has sounded and evacuation is required. Particular attention should be paid to isolated office and individuals who may be deaf or hard of hearing. An assertive manner and authoritative voice will help motivate those who are hesitant about evacuating. Instruct occupants to use the exit stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the floor.

### **2. Close Doors**

While checking the floor and alerting occupants, the floor warden should also be closing the doors to all rooms. Closing doors helps prevent fire spread, as well as limiting the spread of smoke and toxic gases. (Special note: If investigating a bomb threat leave the doors open).

### **3. Remind Evacuating Occupants of their Meeting Place**

As tenants exit the floor, one of the floor's two floor wardens should remind them:

- A. Keep to the right in the stairwell.
- B. Where the re-assembly point is.

It is also a good idea to remind people not to enter a floor where the alarm is sounding and to remain at the meeting place until notified.

### **4. Inform Fire & Life Safety Director or PF&R of Any Problems**

Persons remaining on the floor or in the stairwell should be reported to the building's Fire & Life Safety Director or a PF&R Representative. This will help ensure that firefighters are sent to assist those in need if evacuation is required.

### **5. Assign Assistants to those Persons who use Wheelchairs**

Two persons (and alternates) should be assigned to each individual whose limited mobility would prevent their evacuating by way of the exit stairwells. This should be done before a fire emergency so that all three persons will have time to become familiar with their course of action.

# Fire Response Checklist For Floor Wardens



Walk the entire floor to familiarize yourself with the layout. Know the location of:

- Elevator lobby
- Offices
- Hallways leading to exits
- Dead end hallways
- Stairwells
- Restrooms



Determine fire and life safety equipment present on the floor and in the stairwell.  
(Check those present:)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heat detectors                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Dead end hallways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sprinklers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Stairwells        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Doors   | <input type="checkbox"/> Restrooms         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers    How many? <input type="text"/> |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manual Pull Alarms    How many? <input type="text"/> |  |

## Individuals Needing Assistance



Identify individuals who need assistance and their Assistance Monitors.

|                      |                      |             |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | Assistant 1 |
| Name                 |                      |             |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | Assistant 2 |
|                      |                      |             |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | Assistant 1 |
| Name                 |                      |             |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | Assistant 2 |

Explain fire response procedures to all those involved in evacuation of persons unable to use exit stairwells. Hands-on practice is highly recommended.

# Evacuation

## When the alarm sounds, or a fire is discovered:

- Begin evacuation immediately. Do not wait for instructions.
- Tour the floor. Instruct all occupants to evacuate.
- Close the door to all rooms to help prevent the spread of fire and smoke.
- Remind evacuating occupants of the following points:
  - Location of meeting place.
  - To stay to the right in the stairwell.
  - To stay at the meeting place until notified.
  - To use the stairwells, not elevators.
  - Not to enter a floor where the alarm is sounding.
- Inform either the building's Fire Safety Director or PF&R personnel of any problems or persons remaining on the floor.
- Supervise evacuation of those with special needs.



**WE RESPOND**  
*Always Ready*  
*Always There*

# Fire Evacuation Procedures for Persons Unable to Use Exit Stairs

## If You Move to the Exit and Have Persons to Assist You:

- Move to the exit stairwell. Wait until all persons on the floor have evacuated and traffic in the stairwell has cleared.
- If the stairwell is free of smoke, enter and wait in the stairwell landing. Two people should wait with you, while one person should inform the arriving Fire Department of your location. Make sure that the door is securely closed.
- Wait with your assistants for further instructions. The Fire Department will send fire fighters to assist you if evacuation is necessary.
- If you are waiting in the exit stairwell and traffic builds from the evacuation of upper floors, re-enter your floor to allow others to pass and the stairwell to clear.
- If there are too many individuals to wait on the landing, an area of refuge should be sought on the floor, such as an apartment or a room with a door, window and telephone. Use the fire survival skills described below.
- Assistants should not attempt to carry you down the stairs unless conditions in the stairwell become threatening. If conditions deteriorate, the assistants can then perform a carry down the stairs to a safer area.

## If You Are Not Able to Leave the Floor:

- If you do not have persons to wait with you, or are unable to leave your unit, refuge should be sought on the floor. Most appropriate would be a totally enclosed room with a telephone and window. This may be your apartment or an office.

Observe the following survival rules:

- Use towels or clothing to block openings around doors or vents where smoke might enter. Put a wet cloth over your mouth or nose.
- Place a signal in the window. The signal can be anything that will call attention to your location. For instance, tie the curtains in a knot.
- If smoke or fire enters your unit, call 9-1-1 to report your location. Stay low to the floor to breathe the best air.
- It is advisable not to open or break windows. Often smoke from outside of the building can enter through open windows. Breaking windows will put you at greater risk to smoke entering from the outside, and will hamper rescue efforts below.

Time to show the video "Getting Out Alive".

## VIDEOTAPE REVIEW QUESTIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ is the first thing to do when you discover a fire too large to put out with a fire extinguisher.
  - Call 9-1-1.
  - Shout "FIRE!"
  - Try to contain it.
- One of the biggest errors many employees make when they hear their fire alarm is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Not taking the alarm seriously.
  - Failing to call 9-1-1.
  - Using the elevator.
- In the video, Jim McMullen says most people try to escape from a workspace fire by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Following the exit signs.
  - Going out the way they came in.
  - Waiting for help.
- In a fire emergency, all building occupants should \_\_\_\_\_ after exiting.
  - Seek medical help.
  - Go to the reassembly point.
  - Report to the Fire Marshal.

### True or False

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Many fire departments maintain and update the official evacuation plan for all buildings in the area they serve.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Before responding to your building's fire alarm, you should first try to determine if it is a false alarm.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The only valid reason for going back into a burning building is to rescue someone if the fire department is late in arriving.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The "buddy system" is a method which organizations often employ to assist people with disabilities in a fire emergency.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Primary and secondary exits, fire extinguisher locations, and fire alarm pull stations are all items you should have on your posted evacuation floor plan.

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| Name: |  |
| Date: |  |

# GETTING OUT ALIVE

## ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. (c) Try to contain it...Fire feeds on oxygen, and can spread through a building quickly. You can retard the fire's growth by closing all nearby doors.
2. (a) Not taking the alarm seriously...Whenever you hear the fire alarm, react as though it is a real fire.
3. (b) Going out the same way they came in...The reason is that most people do not learn where their secondary exits are.
4. (b) Go to the reassembly point...All of the building's occupants will be counted at your reassembly point to determine if anyone is missing.

### TRUE or FALSE

1. False...It is your responsibility to create and maintain your evacuation plan.
2. False...Start your evacuation procedures whenever the alarm sounds.
3. False...There is never a good reason to go back into a burning building.
4. True.
5. True...You may also want to include the locations of first aid kits on your plan.



# GETTING OUT ALIVE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If a fire occurred in your workplace right now, what would you do?
2. What do you feel is the best fire prevention activity your organization conducts? What needs to be improved upon?
3. If you needed to help a friend who was just burned, would you know what to do?
4. How has your organization prepared to assist people with disabilities in a fire emergency?
5. Do you feel your fire evacuation plan is well understood by everyone in your organization? What would happen if you held a fire exit drill unannounced?



# GETTING OUT ALIVE

## HOW TO REACT WHEN A FIRE OCCURS

### SHOULD YOU FIGHT THE FIRE?

**Before you begin to fight a fire you need to:**

- Call the Fire Department.
- Make sure the building is being evacuated.
- Determine that the fire is confined to a small area and is not spreading.
- Confirm that there is a clear path to an exit which is not threatened by the fire.
- Know how to use the extinguisher.

### HOW TO EVACUATE SAFELY

**If you've determined the fire is too large for you to fight, leave the area and:**

- Close, but don't lock, all doors behind you.
- Use the nearest stairwell exit; do not take the elevator. Remember, if there is smoke in the hallway, stay low, under the smoke.
- Meet in a pre-determined, designated area so a head count can be made.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE TRAPPED

**You can survive even if you're trapped in a burning building. To increase the amount of time you have before the firefighters reach you, remember the following:**

- Call the fire department and tell them exactly where you are.
- Put as much distance between yourself and the fire as possible. Close all doors as you go, testing each one for heat with the back of your hand. If it is warm to the touch, don't open it.
- Seal any cracks or vents by using wet cloth, dry cloth, paper, tape, or anything you can find. Turn off the ventilation system, if possible.



## In Case of Fire...

### **DO:**

**Keep calm**  
**Report the fire by calling 9-1-1**  
**Advise other employees**  
**Use nearest stairwell**  
**Close doors and windows**  
**Keep low, under the smoke**  
**Use an extinguisher on a small fire**  
**Go to assigned assembly area**  
**Direct firefighters to emergency**

### **DON'T:**

Panic  
Assume the fire has been reported  
Try to quickly gather belongings  
Use elevator  
Break windows  
Run through smoke-filled areas  
Use an extinguisher on a large fire  
Become a "spectator" once outside  
Go back into the building

## **IF YOU WORK IN A HIGH-RISE**

- Store a flashlight and a whistle at your work station.
- Know your emergency safety procedures and evacuation plans. If none are available, or if they are not accurate, make sure they are updated.
- Know what is expected of you in an emergency.
- Locate all primary and secondary exits. Practice walking through these evacuation routes...blindfolded. Try it while holding your breath also.
- Identify the locations and types of fire extinguishers in your work area and along the exit routes.
- If you travel and stay in high-rise hotels, apply the same fire safety guidelines you use at work. For example:
  - Familiarize yourself with the safety features in the building.
  - Know your exits and evacuation plan.
  - Use the stairwell, not the elevator, if there is a fire.
  - Count the number of doors between your room and the stairwell.
  - Walk it with your eyes closed and holding your breath. Can you make it?

## **FIRE EXTINGUISHERS**

Fire extinguishers save lives and property by putting out or containing small fires until the fire department arrives. Even against small fires, however, extinguishers are useful only under certain conditions:

- The operator must know how to use them. There is no time to read instructions during an emergency.
- They must be within easy reach and in working order, fully charged.
- They need to be kept near the exit. The user needs to have an escape route that will not be blocked by fire.
- They should match the type of fire you are fighting.
- They must be large enough to put out the fire. Most portable extinguishers discharge completely in as few as eight seconds.

## OPERATING A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

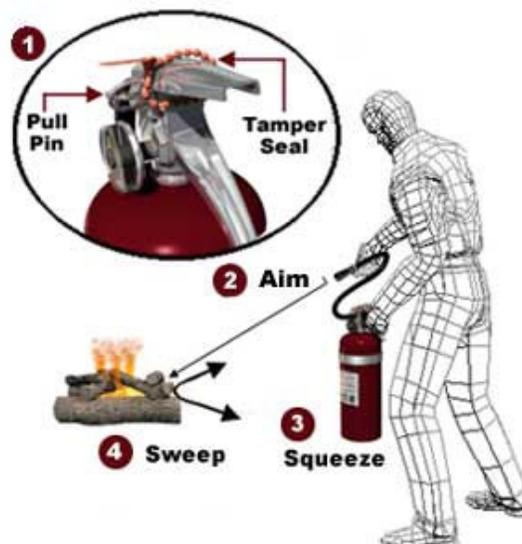
Before using your extinguisher, make sure your back is to an exit and that you are standing six to eight feet from the fire. **Be sure someone has called 9-1-1 first!** Also, don't try to fight a fire that has grown beyond its original size (such as a waste basket). Ready? Make a **PASS** at it!

**Pull the pin:** Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and pull out the pin located below the handle. This unlocks the operating lever and allows you to discharge the extinguisher. If you are having trouble pulling the pin out, it might be that you are squeezing the handles too tightly. Try releasing your death grip on them and try again.

**Aim low:** Point the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire.

**Squeeze the lever:** Squeeze slowly and evenly to release the extinguisher.

**Sweep from side to side:** Move carefully toward the fire until the flames are out.



# The ABC's of Fire Extinguishers

## SELECTING AN EXTINGUISHER

Fire extinguishers are labeled with letters or pictographs to indicate the kind of fire on which the extinguisher is effective.

**A** **ORDINARY COMBUSTIBLES:** paper, wood, many plastics, fabric, trash



**B** **FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS:** gasoline, oil, grease, some paints and solvents



**C** **ELECTRICAL:** energized electrical equipment including appliances, computers, circuit breakers, wiring



## FACTS ABOUT FIRE SPRINKLERS

Automatic fire sprinkler systems have existed for more than 100 years. They have been proven to significantly reduce loss of life and property damage. Still, there are misconceptions about their effectiveness and how they work.

**Myth:** "Water damage from sprinklers is more extensive than fire damage."

**Fact:** Water damage from a sprinkler system will be much less severe than the damage caused by water from firefighting hose lines or from smoke and fire damage if the fire is allowed to burn.

**Myth:** "When a fire occurs, every sprinkler head goes off."

**Fact:** Sprinkler heads are individually activated by heat, and 90% of all fires are controlled with six or fewer heads.

**Myth:** "Sprinklers are costly."

**Fact:** The current cost of installing a sprinkler system is about 1% of the total cost of new construction (\$1.00 - \$1.50 per square foot).

**Myth:** "Sprinklers are designed to protect property, not lives."

**Fact:** They are extremely effective in protecting lives. There are no reported multiple fatalities (3 or more) in the U.S. from fires in sprinkler-protected facilities.

**Myth:** "Sprinklers can be activated by smoke."

**Fact:** Fire sprinkler systems are activated only from the heat of a fire at the location of the head. This occurs usually when the temperature reaches 165 degrees Fahrenheit for several minutes.