



eSafetyLine

Extinguisher Upkeep

Fire Extinguishers

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states that all portable fire extinguishers need to be inspected every 30 days and maintained at least once a year. This leads to an obvious question; what is the difference between an inspection and maintenance?

An inspection is a “quick check” to give a reasonable assurance that an extinguisher is not just available but also fully charged and operable. Inspections should be done when the extinguisher is first put into service and then every 30 days. The items to be included in an inspection were changed in January 2007 by the NFPA. An inspection should now include the following:

- Extinguishers are to be located in their designated location and secured properly.
- The extinguishers in service should be the proper type for the potential fire hazards present.
- Extinguishers are not to be blocked by equipment, coats or any other objects that could interfere with accessing the extinguisher in an emergency.
- Operating instructions for the extinguisher should be readable and on the faceplate of the extinguisher facing outward.
- The pressure of the extinguisher is at the recommended level. The needle should be in the green zone, not too high or too low.

Maintenance should be done at least once a year or when it is specified by an inspection. It involves a “thorough check” of the extinguisher. It includes a thorough examination and repair, recharging or replacement of the extinguisher.

The maintenance should include:

- All monthly inspection items
- Checking the hose and nozzle for cracks, blockages or other damage
- Checking the extinguisher shell for corrosion, dents or other damage
- Carbon dioxide extinguishers should be weighed to ensure no weight deviations greater than 10%.

By completing both the monthly inspections and the annual maintenance your facility can be virtually certain the fire extinguishers in place will work when needed.

Discussion Questions

What is the difference between an inspection and maintenance?

Why is it important that extinguishers not be blocked by equipment?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/_____

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date