



**VENTURA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
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PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

SCOPE: To provide basic information regarding portable fire extinguishers. Reference and additional detailed information may be found in the California Code of Regulations Title 19 and the VCFPD Fire Code.

The Ventura County Fire Department is authorized to be more restrictive than these minimum requirements, when necessary.

DEFINITIONS

HAZARD CLASSIFICATION

Low Hazard: Low or light hazard locations are where combustible materials, including furnishings, decorations and contents are of minor quantity.

Moderate Hazard: Moderate or ordinary hazard locations are where combustible materials and flammable/combustible liquids are present in greater amounts than expected under low hazard occupancies.

High Hazard: High or extra hazard locations are where combustible materials and flammable/combustible liquids are present, in storage, production, use and/or finished product over and above those expected in moderate hazard occupancies.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER: A manually actuated portable device operated by hand, containing an extinguishing agent powder, liquid, or gases which can be expelled under pressure for the purpose of suppressing or extinguishing fire.

1. CLASSES OF FIRES

Fire extinguishers are classified for use based on classes of fire.

CLASS A: Ordinary combustible materials such as wood and paper.

CLASS B: Flammable/Combustible Liquids

CLASS C: Energized electrical equipment. The extinguishing agent must not conduct electricity.

CLASS D: Combustible metals.

CLASS K: Vegetable or animal oils and fats in cooking equipment.

2. GENERAL

- A. The letter for Class A and B extinguishers is preceded by a rating number, which indicates the relative extinguishing effectiveness.
- B. Each extinguisher shall be Listed and labeled to identify its designed use.
- C. Selection of extinguishers shall be based on type of hazards and classification of hazards: low, moderate or high. It is recommended that multipurpose (ABC) extinguishers be used when possible. Extinguishers shall be provided for the protection of both the structure and contents.
- D. When using multipurpose extinguishers for the protection of Class B hazards, the maximum travel distances shall be that required for Class B extinguishers.
- E. Two or more extinguishers of a lower rating shall not be used to fulfill the requirements of a single extinguisher.
- F. Extinguishers shall be conspicuously located. Distances to extinguishers shall be measured along unobstructed paths of travel.
- G. Extinguishers not exceeding 40 lbs shall be mounted with the top not more than 5 feet above the floor. Handicap accessibility requirements from the Building Code may be more restrictive.
- H. Extinguishers subject to dislodging, vibration or physical damage shall be adequately protected.
- I. Cabinets housing extinguishers shall not be locked.
- J. Extinguishers shall be maintained in an operable condition and inspected at least monthly by the building owner, occupant, or his/her authorized agent.
- K. Extinguishers shall be serviced yearly and immediately after use, by a person licensed by the State Fire Marshal.
- L. An Annual Maintenance Tag approved by the State Fire Marshal shall be attached to extinguishers and have a service date current within 1 year. For new extinguishers, the sales receipt is acceptable for one year from the date of purchase.

3. SIZE AND PLACEMENT

A. CLASS A

- Minimum of 1 extinguisher, regardless of floor area
- Maximum travel distance is 75 ft for all Class A extinguishers
- Maximum floor area for each Class A extinguisher is 11,250 sq ft

	Low Hazard Occupancy	Moderate Hazard Occupancy	High Hazard Occupancy
Minimum Single Extinguisher	2-A	2-A	4-A
Max. Floor Area Per unit of A	3,000 sq ft	1,500 sq ft	1,000 sq ft

B. CLASS B

	Minimum Extinguisher Rating	Maximum Travel Distance to Extinguisher
Low Hazard	5B	30 ft
	10B	50 ft
Moderate Hazard	10B	30 ft
	20B	50 ft
High Hazard	40B	30 ft
	80B	50 ft

C. CLASS C

Electricity is a shock hazard and may provide an ignition source, but the fire itself is considered Class A or Class B. Extinguishers shall be sized and placed on the basis of the anticipated Class A or B hazard.

D. CLASS D

Class D extinguishers shall be within 75 ft travel distance from areas where combustible metal powders, flakes, shavings, chips, or similarly sized products are generated. Extinguisher size determination shall be based on the specific metal, it's size, area to be covered and recommendations by the extinguisher manufacturer. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) should be consulted when selecting Class D extinguishers.

E. CLASS K

A Class K extinguisher shall be within 30 ft travel distance of areas with heat processing equipment for food, using combustible cooking media.

4. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Special Coverage requirements for fire extinguishers in theater type A Occupancies are listed in the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1, Article 3, Section 3.29.

Some of the specific fire extinguisher minimum requirements identified in the VCFPD Fire Code are listed below:

- A. Aircraft refueler vehicles – 2 ea, 20-B:C readily accessible, one on each side.
- B. Aircraft towing vehicles – 20-B:C on vehicle.
- C. Asphalt kettles – 20-B:C within 30 ft. One 20-B:C shall be located on roofs during asphalt coating operations.
- D. Automobile wrecking yards – 4-A:40-B:C at each office or storage building and on each site operation vehicle.
- E. Battery charging areas for industrial trucks (forklifts, etc) – 4-A:20-B:C within 20 ft.
- F. Hot work/welding – 2-A:20-B:C within 30 ft of operations.
- G. Internal combustion engines at outdoor carnivals and fairs – 2-A:10-B:C
- H. Motor vehicle fuel dispensing – 2-A:20-B:C within 75 ft of each dispenser.
- I. Parade floats – 2-A:10-B:C readily accessible.
- J. Recreational fires – 4-A readily accessible.