



**Fire Prevention
Month**

eSafetyLine

Types of Extinguishers

Just as fires are classified as Class A, B, C and D; fire extinguishers are classified the same way and should be used on the corresponding type of fire. Symbols on the extinguisher help to be sure that it will be used to fight a correct class of fire. They are pictures that combine the uses and nonuses of extinguishers on a single label. Many fire extinguishers are now available with multi-class ratings. This means that they can be used on different types of fires. These extinguishers will be labeled with more than one symbol. For example, one extinguisher may be labeled B-C; this indicates that this one extinguisher can be used on EITHER Class B or C fires.

Labels on fire extinguishers will show both the class of the fire as well as the pictogram or symbol.



These symbols would be found on an extinguisher to fight a Class A fire. It would work well on ordinary combustibles like wood, paper and cloth. These extinguishers will contain any of the follow extinguishing media: pressurized water, multipurpose dry chemicals, halon and wet chemicals. They put the fire out by either removing the oxygen or cooling the burning materials below the ignition point.



These symbols apply to a Class B fire. The extinguisher is meant to deal with fires that use a flammable liquid as the fuel. Dry chemical powder carbon dioxide (CO₂) and foam are used to extinguish the fire by smothering the flames by removing the oxygen needed by the fire.



The pictogram shows that this type of fire's heat source is an energized electrical circuit. The most effective way to put out a Class C fire is to turn off the electricity at the breaker. The remaining fire can then be dealt with as a Class A fire. If turning off the electricity isn't an option, extinguishers containing dry chemicals or carbon dioxide can be used to smother the flames.



This class of extinguishers is very specific to the fuel of the fire. Class D fires are metal fires and the extinguishing medium used must be match specifically to the metal that is burning. Whichever media is used, the fire is put out by removing the oxygen source of the fire.

It is important to remember to use the correct extinguisher for the fire. Using the wrong type can cause a fire to get much worse in a very short amount of time.

In the fine print on the label, the class letters are preceded by numbers — for example, 3-A:40-B:C — which are the extinguisher's classification rating. The numbers tell how effective the extinguisher is against each type of fire, regardless of its weight or the chemical it uses. The higher the number, the greater the effectiveness. So an extinguisher with a 4-A rating is more effective on ordinary combustibles than a 2-A one. The C designation carries no number; it just means the extinguisher's chemicals won't conduct electricity.

Discussion Questions

What do the numbers before the class on the label mean?

Why is important to always use the correct extinguisher for the fire class?

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