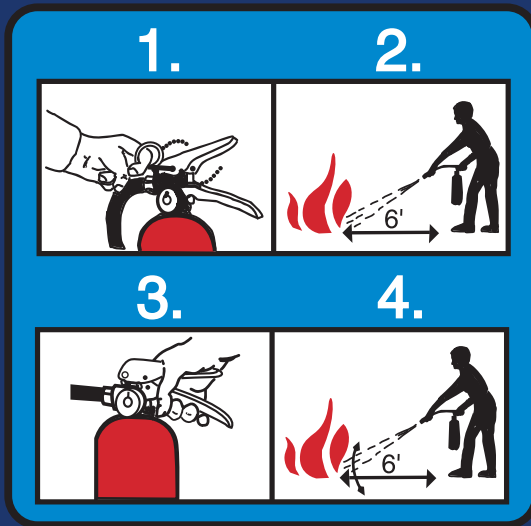


Fire extinguishers are special pressurized devices that release chemicals or water to put out a fire. They keep small fires from spreading, assist in fighting fires until the fire department arrives and can help provide an escape route for you and your family.

REMEMBER: A fire extinguisher is no substitute for the fire department. Always call the fire department first – no matter how small you think the fire is.



## How do fire extinguishers work?

Fire is a chemical reaction called combustion. Fire needs fuel, oxygen and heat in order to burn. Fire extinguishers apply an “agent” that will cool burning fuel or restrict or remove oxygen so the fire cannot continue to burn. Small household fires can be quickly controlled by a fire extinguisher.

Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher. But simply owning an extinguisher is not enough.

One-third of all people injured by fire are hurt while trying to control or extinguish a fire. You need the right type of extinguisher and you must know how and when to use it



Homeland Security  
and Emergency Services

## OFFICE OF FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

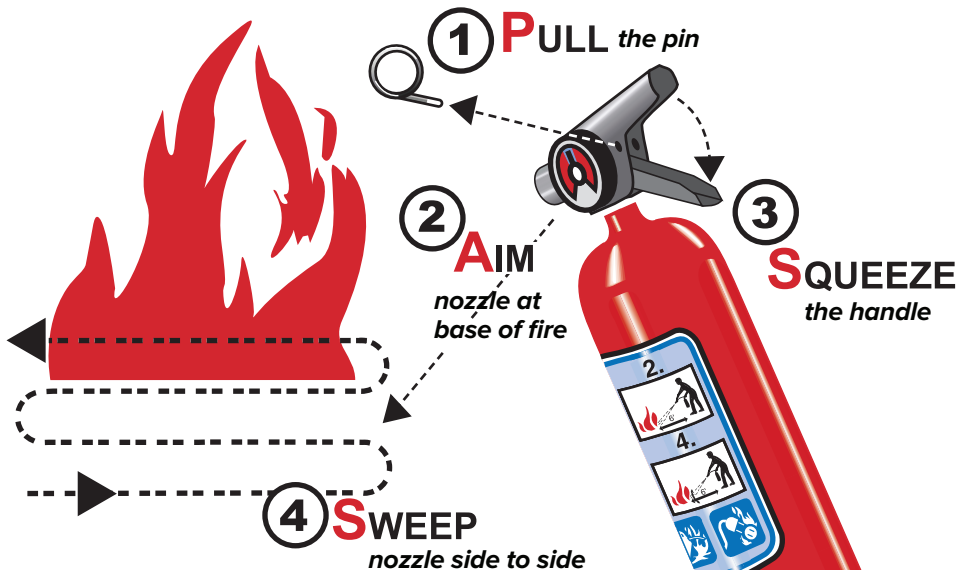
Harriman State Office Campus  
1220 Washington Avenue  
Building 7A, Floor 2  
Albany, NY 12226  
[www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc](http://www.dhses.ny.gov/ofpc)



# HOME FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

**To operate an extinguisher:** *Check your own extinguisher's label for detailed instructions.*

**P**ull  
**A**im  
**S**queeze  
**S**weep



## Use the correct extinguisher



For **Class A** fires in **ordinary combustibles**, such as wood, paper, cloth, upholstery, plastics and similar materials: use a water or dry chemical extinguisher with either of these symbols on the label.



For **Class B** fires fueled by **flammable liquids and gases**, such as kitchen greases, paint, oil, kerosene and gasoline: use a dry chemical or carbon dioxide extinguisher with either of these symbols on the label. **NEVER USE WATER.**



For **Class C** fires involving live **electrical equipment or wires**: use a dry chemical or carbon dioxide extinguisher with either of these symbols on the label. If possible, turn off the electricity first. Once the power is off, the fire becomes class A or B. **NEVER USE WATER.**

## Know your extinguisher

Before you invest in one or more extinguishers, consider where you need them. Where are fires most likely to start? What type of fire would be most likely? Not all extinguishers work on all types of fires.

Discuss your needs with your local fire department. They can help you choose the best type of extinguisher for your home. Make sure you select an extinguisher which can be easily handled by all family members.

Keep extinguishers in a handy location. The best location in most situations is just inside a door or entrance, out of the reach of children. Avoid locating an extinguisher right next to where a fire could develop.

Smoke, heat or flames from a fire may keep you from reaching the extinguisher. Be sure that everyone in the family knows where extinguishers are located and how to use them.

Purchase extinguishers listed by a nationally accepted testing laboratory, such as Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) or Factory Mutual (FM). Extinguishers rated ABC are effective on most types of fire.

**DON'T FIGHT A FIRE UNLESS:** you call the fire department first. An extinguisher is no substitute for the fire department.

**the fire is small and not spreading.** A fire can double in size every two or three minutes.

**you can get out fast if you can't control the fire.** Don't get trapped. Make sure the fire is not between you and your exit.

**you have the right extinguisher** for what's burning. **READ THE LABEL!** Know what types of extinguisher you have before there is a fire.

**your extinguisher works.** Inspect extinguishers once a month for signs of damage, corrosion, tampering and leaks. A partially discharged extinguisher is an empty one.

**you know how to use your extinguisher.** It's too late to read the instructions when the fire is burning. Attend an extinguisher training class at your local fire station.

## REMEMBER:

**Smoke detectors are your first line of defense against fires. They can warn you of a fire while it's still small enough to put out with an extinguisher and, most importantly, they can provide extra time for you and your family to escape.**

**DEVELOP AND PRACTICE** a home fire escape plan.

**NEVER GO BACK** into a burning building for any reason.