

Workplace Fire Safety

Fire prevention is an important part of maintaining a healthy and safe workplace. While fires are relatively uncommon in many workplaces, they can occur when hazards go unrecognized or uncontrolled. Identifying potential fire risks, maintaining good housekeeping practices, and ensuring equipment is used and maintained appropriately can help reduce the likelihood of a fire and support a safer work environment for all.

Identifying Fire Hazards in the Workplace

Many workplace fire hazards can be identified and addressed before they result in an incident. Regular workplace inspections and hazard assessments can help identify fire-related risks and support the implementation of appropriate control measures. Additional guidance on identifying and assessing workplace hazards are available in the PEI Workers Compensation Board [Guide to Performing a Hazard Assessment](#).

Common workplace fire hazards may include:

- Damaged electrical cords, outlets, or equipment.
- Overloaded power bars or electrical circuits.
- Accumulations of paper, cardboard, dust, or other combustible materials.
- Improper storage of flammable products near heat sources.
- Equipment that produces unusual heat, odours, or signs of malfunction.



Prevent. Prepare. Protect.

Many workplace fires can be prevented through routine maintenance, good housekeeping, and safe work practices. Keeping work areas clean and organized, ensuring equipment is properly maintained, and addressing potential hazards promptly can help reduce fire risks and support a safer work environment. Being prepared starts with understanding the fire safety procedures for your work location, including the location of emergency exits, designated muster stations, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers. Understanding these procedures can help support a safe and orderly response should a fire occur.

Fire Extinguishers: Know the Basics

Employees should know where fire extinguishers are located within their work area and understand when and how they may be used safely. A simple way to remember the basic steps for operating a [fire extinguisher](#) is the PASS method:

- **P**ull the pin.
- **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze the handle.
- **S**weep from side to side until the fire appears to be out.

Employees should never attempt to fight a fire if they are unsure what is burning, do not know which type of extinguisher to use, or if the fire is spreading beyond the area where it started. If there is any uncertainty about the situation, personal safety should remain the priority and workplace emergency procedures should be followed.



FIRE SAFETY GUIDE

Ensure Workplace Fire Safety with OSHA-Compliant Equipment and Inspections



FIRE EXTINGUISHER TYPES



Class A Fires

- Description: Fires in ordinary combustible materials, such as wood, cloth, paper, rubber, and many plastics.
- Recommended Extinguisher: Water, Foam, ABC Dry Chemical



Class B Fires

- Description: Fires in flammable liquids, combustible liquids, petroleum greases, tars, oils, oil-based paints, solvents, lacquers, alcohols, and flammable gases.
- Recommended Extinguisher: Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Foam, ABC Dry Chemical



Class C Fires

- Description: Fires that involve energized electrical equipment.
- Recommended Extinguisher: Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), ABC Dry Chemical (Do not use water!)



Class D Fires

- Description: Fires in combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, lithium, and potassium.
- Recommended Extinguisher: Specialized Dry Powder (Class D Extinguisher)



Class K Fires

- Description: Fires in cooking appliances that involve combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal oils and fats).
- Recommended Extinguisher: Wet Chemical (Class K Extinguisher)

INSPECT FIRE EQUIPMENT REGULARLY

Why Conduct Regular Inspections

- Ensure Readiness – All fire protection equipment must be in good working condition for immediate use.
- Prevent Malfunctions – Inspections help detect issues such as extinguisher leaks, malfunctioning hydrants, or faulty alarm systems.
- Reduce Property Damage & Save Lives – Well-maintained fire protection equipment can significantly minimize fire hazards and losses.
- Regulatory Compliance – OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) require regular maintenance of fire equipment.

Inspection Checklist

- Fire Extinguishers – Check pressure, safety pin, physical damage, and expiration date.
- Fire Hydrants – Ensure accessibility, check for leaks, rust, and test the valve.
- Fire Alarm System – Test alarms, strobes, and smoke detectors.
- Sprinkler System – Check for blockages, leaks, and proper valve operation.
- Fire Doors & Escape Routes – Ensure fire doors close properly and escape routes remain clear.
- Emergency Lighting & Exit Signs – Verify exit signs are illuminated and emergency lights function properly.



HOW TO USE A Fire Extinguisher

PULL

- Pull the pin to break the tamper seal and unlock the extinguisher.



2

AIM

- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire rather than at the flames.



SQUEEZE

- Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.



4

SWEEP

- Sweep the nozzle from side to side, covering the base of the fire until it is completely out.



HOW TO USE A Fire Hydrant

1

Open the cabinet

- Find the fire hydrant and open the cabinet.



2

Pull out and extend the hose

- Unroll the hose and ensure the nozzle is attached.



3

Turn on the water supply

- Some hydrants activate automatically; if not, turn the valve inside.



4

Aim and spray

- Hold the nozzle firmly, open its valve if needed, aim at the fire's base, and sweep side to side.



OSHA
COMPLIANT