

# 10 Important Rules to Remember About How and When to Use a Fire Extinguisher

- 1.** Most fires start small. If the fire is contained to a single object, such as a trash can, you may want to try using a fire extinguisher to put out the flames. Remember, you only have seconds- a fire burning for just 1 minute will have tripled its original size.



- 2.** You should only consider using a fire extinguisher if all members of your home have been alerted to the fire and the fire department has been called. Also, make sure you are safe from smoke and that the fire is not between you and your only escape route.



- 3.** When purchasing a fire extinguisher, look for one that is tested by an independent testing laboratory. Also, look for one labeled A-B-C as it can be used on most fires that would occur in your home. You want to be sure that the type of fire extinguisher you would be using would be effective at putting the fire out.



- 4.** Make sure you are physically able to handle a fire extinguisher. Some models are heavy and may be hard to operate and hold at the same time.

- 5.** Know how to operate the extinguisher quickly. You will not have time to read instructions during an emergency.



- 6.** Keep your fire extinguisher in an easily accessible area. Make sure it is not blocked by anything that would keep you from grabbing it quickly in an emergency.

- 7. Remember the word P.A.S.S.**

## Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep

**Pull** the pin. Some extinguishers require unlocking a latch, pressing a puncture lever, or other such motion.



**Aim** low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle (or its horn or hose) at the base of the fire.

**Squeeze** the handle. This releases the extinguishing agent.



**Sweep** from side to side at the base of the fire until it appears to be out. Watch the fire area in case the fire breaks out again, and repeat use of the extinguisher if necessary.



- 8.** If your means of escape becomes compromised at any time while using an extinguisher, get out of the house as fast as possible and wait for the fire department.

- 9.** If you have any doubt about whether or not to fight a fire with an extinguisher, DON'T! Get out and stay out.

- 10.** Ask your fire department about information on fire extinguisher training in your area. Many departments offer training sessions to the public.