

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

PROPANE SAFETY BULLETIN

Summary

This bulletin covers procedures relating to fire extinguishers for LP-gas facilities, including offices.

Who should attend

- Employees working in or around facilities that store or use LP-gas

NOTE: Employees who do not attend this meeting should be trained on this subject as soon as possible

Additional Material

- Information from companies that supply and service fire extinguishers
- Fire Prevention Bureaus of larger fire departments provide training officers and may provide a “fire pan” demonstration or employee training.
- Most safety equipment and training providers offer fire-extinguisher training materials.

Key codes and standards for this topic

“Principles That Apply to Propane Fires and Emergencies” and “Operating Characteristics and Limitation of Portable Fire Extinguishers,” Railroad Commission of Texas, Texas Propane Training Module 2.1, *Operating a Dispenser To Fill DOT Cylinders and ASME Motor/Mobile Fuel Tanks*, pp. 73-74.
National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 58, *LP-Gas Code* (2001 edition), §§3.8.5, General Precautions; 3.10.2.4, Fire Protection; 5.5, Fire Protection; 6.2.4, Fire Extinguishers; 6.3.7, Fire Extinguishers; Appendix A, §§5.5 and 6.3.7.
NFPA 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*
29 CFR §1910.157, Portable Fire Extinguishers
49 CFR §393.95, Emergency Equipment on All Power Units

Company Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Note any additional materials used on the attached documentation form, or indicate not applicable.

A company SOP may provide information to cylinder customers regarding proper supervision and training of employees who perform propane activities.

Documentation

Complete the attached documentation form listing the date, time and location of the safety meeting and the printed names and signatures of the attendees, name of persons who should have attended but did not, and copies of any materials distributed, video shown, or visuals aids used in the demonstration. These materials should be properly filed in a safe location.



RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

PROPANE SAFETY BULLETIN HANDOUT

Workplace

- Fire extinguishers must be provided for employee use. Extinguisher selection and installation must be based on the class of fire that may occur in the workplace and on the size and degree of hazard that would affect the extinguishers' use.*
- Where fire extinguishers are provided in the workplace, training must be conducted to familiarize employees with the general principles of fire-extinguisher use and the hazards involved with initial-stage firefighting. Such training must be conducted for new employees upon initial employment and for current employees at least annually thereafter.
- Employees who have been designated to use firefighting equipment as part of an emergency action plan must be trained in the use of the appropriate equipment upon initial assignment to the designated group of employees and at least annually thereafter.
- Extinguishers must be mounted, located and identified so they are readily accessible to employees without subjecting the employees to possible injury.
- Extinguishers must be maintained in a fully charged and operable condition and kept in their designated location at all times except during use.
- Extinguishers for Class A fires (ordinary combustible materials such as paper, wood, cardboard, and most plastics) must be located so the travel distance for employees to any fire extinguisher is 75 feet or less.*
- Extinguishers for use by employees on Class B fires (flammable or combustible liquids such as gasoline, propane, kerosene, grease and oil) must be located so the travel distance from the Class B hazard area to any fire extinguisher is 50 feet or less.*
- Extinguishers used for Class C hazards (fires involving electrical equipment, such as appliances, wiring, circuit breakers and outlets) must be located on the basis of the appropriate pattern for the existing Class A or Class B hazards.* Never use water to extinguish a class C fire—the risk of electrical shock is too great.
- Extinguishers must be subjected to an annual maintenance check. The check must document the annual maintenance date, and the documentation must be retained for one year after the last entry or the life of the fire extinguisher shell, whichever is less.
- Extinguishers must be inspected, maintained and tested.

* NOTE. Starred items do not apply to extinguishers provided for employee use on the outside of workplace buildings or structures.

- Follow any and all company procedures relating to portable fire extinguisher activities.
- Contact your supervisor immediately, if you have any portable fire extinguisher safety concerns or questions.

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Training

Actual fire pan training in the use of fire extinguishers is recommended.

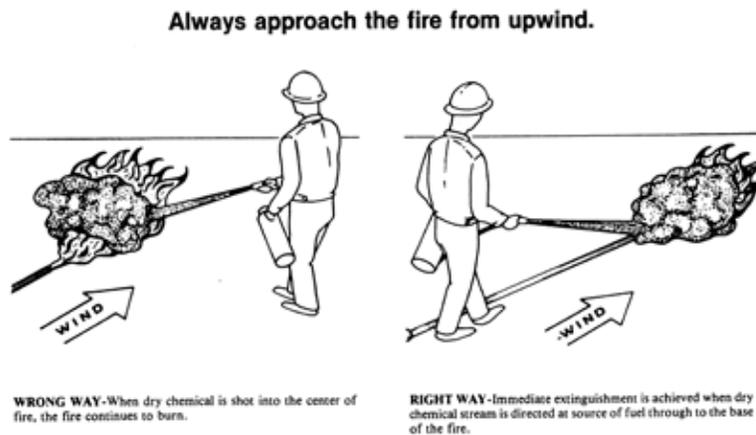
In any propane emergency where there is fire, flames should not be extinguished unless by doing so the fuel supply can be turned off. If the fire is extinguished and the supply of fuel is not turned off, an explosion hazard greater than the fire hazard may be created.

A dry chemical fire extinguisher has an effective range of about 5 to 20 feet and a discharge duration of 10 to 40 seconds.

Attempt to use a fire extinguisher if and only if:

- The fire department has been called. 911 is the emergency number.
- The fire is small and contained.
- You know your escape route and can fight the fire with your back to the exit.
- You know what type of extinguisher is required.
- The correct extinguisher is immediately at hand.
- You have been trained in how to use the extinguisher.

Figure 1a Wrong Way and Right Way To Apply a Fire Extinguisher



Always approach the fire from upwind.

There is a right and a wrong way to handle small LP-Gas fires.

NOTE: Never extinguish an LP-gas fire, unless by doing so, the fuel supply can be shut off immediately.

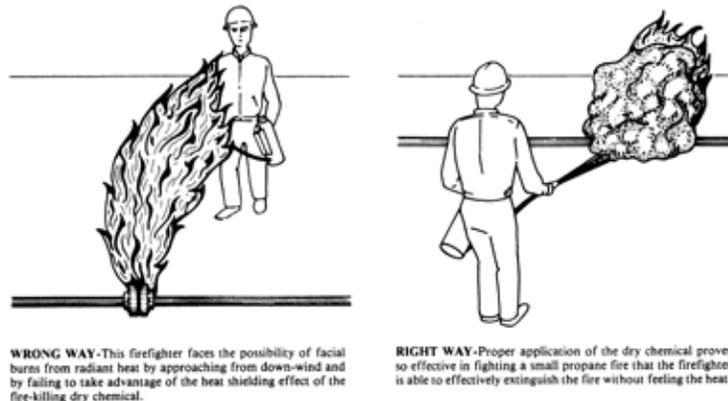


Figure 1b Right Way and Wrong Way to Handle Small LP-Gas Fires

PROPANE
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To remember how to use a fire extinguisher, think of putting out the fire as a test you must PASS.

P	Pull the locking pin.
A	Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire.
S	Squeeze the trigger all the way closed.
S	Sweep the extinguisher discharge side to side over the area of the fire.

General information on fire safety

If your clothing catches on fire, it is a natural response to panic and run. Don't panic and run. Running will just fan the flames and increase the potential for a serious injury.

The correct response is to

STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

on the ground to extinguish the flames. Cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs. If one of your co-workers catches on fire, panics, and starts to run, tackle him or her and smother the flames.

