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# CPOST

## Fire Safety *on-the-job Training*

### The A, B, C, D, and K's of Fire & Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are a common sight wherever you go, from government buildings to businesses to restaurants. They are placed in conspicuous locations purposely so they are easy to locate in case of fire. However, even though the placement of fire extinguishers may seem obvious, there are strict guidelines and standards set forth by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration and the National Fire Protection Association. Fire extinguishers are classified by the type of fire that they will extinguish.



A

**The Class A fire extinguisher** is used for ordinary combustibles, such as wood, paper, some plastics, and textiles. This class of fire requires the heat-absorbing effects of water or the coating effects of certain dry chemicals. Extinguishers that are suitable for Class A fires should be identified by a triangle containing the letter "A."

B

**The Class B fire extinguisher** is used for flammable liquid and gas fires such as oil, gasoline, etc. These fire extinguishers deprive the fire of oxygen and interrupt the fire chain by inhibiting the release of combustible vapors. Extinguishers that are suitable for Class B fires should be identified by a square containing the letter "B."

C

**The Class C fire extinguisher** is used on fires that involve live electrical equipment, which require the use of electrically nonconductive extinguishing agents. (Once the electrical equipment is de-energized, extinguishers for Class A or B fires may be used.) Extinguishers that are suitable for Class C fires should be identified by a circle containing the letter "C."

D

**The Class D fire extinguisher** is used on combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, sodium, etc., which require an extinguishing medium that does not react with the burning metal. Extinguishers that are suitable for Class D fires should be identified by a five-point star containing the letter "D."

K

**The Class K fire extinguisher** is used on fires involving cooking media (fats, grease, and oils) in commercial cooking sites such as restaurants. These extinguishers are identified by the letter K. Fire extinguishers rated for use with class K dangers always contain a wet chemical extinguishing agent which turns the cooking oil and fat that is serving as fuel to soap. The substance is non-combustible and actually absorbs the heat from the flames, eliminating or reducing that element necessary for a fire to continue to burn.

Source: <https://ohsonline.com/>

**Commission on Correctional Peace  
Officer Standards & Training**