

General

The procedure for inspection and maintenance of fire extinguishers varies considerably. Minimal knowledge is necessary to perform a monthly "quick check" or inspection. A trained person who has undergone the instruction necessary to reliably perform maintenance and has the manufacturer's service manual shall maintain the fire extinguishers annually.

The owner or designated agent or occupant of a property in which fire extinguishers are located shall be responsible for inspection monthly. This is the Principal, or his/her delegate, usually the head custodian, in schools and the manager or owner in day-care facilities.

Maintenance, servicing, and recharging shall be performed annually by trained persons, licensed and permitted by the state, and having available the appropriate servicing manual(s), the proper types of tools, recharge materials, lubricants, and manufacturer's recommended replacement parts or parts specifically listed for fire extinguisher use. A licensed fire extinguisher contractor is typically employed by the school or day-care owner or management to perform annual maintenance.

Inspection

Frequency - Fire extinguishers shall be inspected when initially placed in service and thereafter at approximately 30-day intervals.

Procedures - Periodic inspection of fire extinguishers shall include a check of at least the following items:

1. Location in designated place
2. No obstruction to access or visibility
3. Operating instructions on nameplate legible and facing outward
4. Safety seals and tamper indicators not broken or missing
5. Fullness determined by weighing or "hefting"
6. Examination for obvious physical damage, corrosion, leakage, or clogged nozzle
7. Pressure gauge reading or indicator in the operable range or position
8. Condition of tires, wheels, carriage, hose, and nozzle checked (for wheeled units)
9. Yellow Inspection/Maintenance tag in place and less than one year old

Corrective Action - When an inspection of any fire extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed, immediate corrective action shall be taken. Contact the Building Maintenance District for maintenance in public schools or follow the appropriate process in other organizations.

Rechargeable Fire Extinguishers - When an inspection of any rechargeable fire extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8), it shall be subjected to applicable maintenance procedures.

Nonrechargeable Dry Chemical Fire Extinguisher - When an inspection of any nonrechargeable dry chemical fire extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in (3), (5), (6), and (7), it shall be removed from further use, discharged, and destroyed at the direction of the owner or returned to the manufacturer.

Nonrechargeable Halon Agent Fire Extinguisher - When an inspection of any nonrechargeable fire extinguisher containing a halon agent reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in (3), (5), (6), and (7), it shall be removed from service, not discharged, and returned to the manufacturer. If the fire extinguisher is not returned to the manufacturer, it shall be returned to a fire equipment dealer or distributor to permit recovery of the halon.

Inspection Record Keeping

Personnel making inspections shall keep records of all fire extinguishers inspected, including those found to require corrective action.

At least monthly, the date the inspection was performed and the initials of the person performing the inspection shall be recorded (on the extinguisher tag monthly).

Records shall be kept on a tag attached to the fire extinguisher. The tag shall indicate the month and year maintenance was last performed. Any future dates on the tag indicate incorrect labeling and are not in compliance. An inspection checklist may be maintained on file or by an electronic method that provides a permanent record.

Maintenance

Frequency - Fire extinguishers shall be subjected to maintenance at intervals of not more than one year, at the time of hydrostatic test, or when specifically indicated by an inspection or electronic notification.

From National Fire Protection Association, **NFPA 10, Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers**, 2002 Edition as adopted by the State of Georgia, Rules and Regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner Chapter 120-3-3, Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards.