

Obsolete Fire Extinguishers

If Fire Starts...Be Sure the Extinguisher is Reliable!

In recent years the manufacturing and testing of inverting type fire extinguishers was discontinued in the United States. This included the following type extinguishers.

- Soda and acid
- Foam
- Cartridge-operated water
- Cartridge-operated loaded stream

The “upside-down” method of actuation made extinguishers of this type difficult to use; and of greater importance, after 10 to 12 years, many inverting type extinguishers failed the required pressure test and were considered “unsafe” to operate.

Why the Need for a Change!

When extinguishers of this type are inverted, normal operating pressures are about 100 psi. Should the discharge elbow or hose become blocked, pressures in excess of 300 psi may occur. Container failures have seriously injured the operator.

Other disadvantages are:

- They are good conductors of electricity.
- They cannot be turned off once actuated.
- The extinguishing agent is more corrosive than plain water.
- Inspection, maintenance, and recharging is more costly.
- They are potentially dangerous to the operator during use.
- Local authorities, as well as National Fire Protection

Codes, no longer provide credit or recognize fire extinguishers of this type.

Vaporizing Liquid Extinguishers

Extinguishers of this type using carbon tetrachloride or chlorobromomethane became obsolete in the late 1960's. The toxic properties of these extinguishing agents exposed the operator to unwarranted health hazards. Extinguishers of this type should be promptly destroyed and replaced with approved extinguishers.

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Replace Unsafe Fire Extinguishers

Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed and/or approved fire extinguishers are currently available for replacement of all obsolete type extinguishers.

See Great American's Loss Prevention Data Guide, entitled "Portable Fire Extinguishers" (F.13381), which identifies the various types of extinguishers for each fire hazard classification.

For additional information, contact your local Great American Loss Prevention Department. of this type should be promptly destroyed and replaced with approved extinguishers.

The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to simply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.
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