



VITALS

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A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

Fire Extinguishers



Many of us have probably not done much with fire extinguishers since we got out of training --besides making sure that they have not expired and need recharging. If your work safety program is truly comprehensive, fire extinguisher and fire safety training must be ongoing and tailored to meet the needs of your specific work environments. The first step is to identify and measure fire risks. Are there housekeeping or storage issues that create fire risk? What does it take for a fire to occur?

Fire can be thought of as a chemical reaction. It occurs when fuel, oxygen, and an ignition source get together. Fire extinguishers remove one or more of the elements from this equation. The NFPA standards classify fire extinguishers as Class A, Class B, Class C, Class ABC, and Class D. The Class ABC multipurpose dry chemical fire extinguisher is the most commonly used. Can personnel safely assess a fire situation? Can they make a "fight or flight" decision based on factors such as the size and location of fire; levels of heat, smoke or fumes; the presence of the toxic products of combustion such as carbon monoxide and cyanide; and the availability of adequate escape routes? If they choose to use a fire extinguisher, can they do it?

Most of us can recite the PASS technique: pull, aim, squeeze, and sweep. Some folks call it APASS because they've added an "Alarm/Alert" component, such as yelling "fire" or pulling an alarm. But how many of us have actually had hands-on experience? Do you know how much actual discharge time you have with a 10-pound ABC extinguisher? It's about 20 seconds. Hands-on training can build confidence and at the same time prevent over-confidence. If we know what a fire extinguisher can actually do, we can make a safer decision about when to use it.

Poster Pointers

Bad Weather Doesn't Cause Accidents. People Do!

Adverse weather conditions increase the need for the application of "Due Regard". Although most crashes occur in daylight hours under clear conditions, Medical Transportation professionals must anticipate that the number and magnitude of the errors of non-professional drivers will increase anytime things are bad on the road. It is critical to change following distances as conditions change. For a great review of the four second rule, go to "Avoiding Rear-End Collisions" in "Arrive Alive Do No Harm".



Sign Up for The
EVOC - "T3" Train-the-Trainer Course

February 3-5th, 2009

American Integrated Training Systems, Inc. (AITS) in cooperation with Life Line Ambulance Service, Prescott, Arizona will be conducting a "(T3) Train the Trainer Course" February 3-5, 2009 to qualify personnel to conduct the US Department of Transportation, Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC): National Standard Curriculum. This course is appropriate for Wheelchair Van, Ambulance and Fire Apparatus training. The cost for this course is \$575.00 for each participant. Registration form and brochure may be downloaded at www.aitstraining.com. For further information contact Billy Rutherford at 703.440.0914 or brutherford@aol.com

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