

RISK CONTROL CONSULTING

Fire Extinguishers: Service and Inspection Requirements

Portable fire extinguishers are selected and distributed for employee use based upon the classes of workplace fires and the size of the hazard anticipated. Per OSHA regulations, they must be inspected, tested and maintained on a monthly and annual basis. To ensure these requirements are met, the guidelines are outlined below.

Annual Service

Annual documented maintenance is required for all extinguishers and should be performed by a qualified company. The following is conducted on annual maintenance checks:

- Verify no recalls were issued
- Assure the gauge is not damaged
- Examine the handle and external components
- Remove the hose and inspect for blockage
- Verify the unit has not been discharged
- Recharge
- Perform hydrostatic testing every 5 or 12 years depending on type
- Maintenance/inspection tag should be noted with the date



The image shows a standard fire extinguisher inspection tag. It is divided into two main sections: 'FIRE EXTINGUISHER RECHARGE & INSPECTION RECORD' and 'INSPECTION RECORD'. The left section contains instructions for inspection and recharging, with checkboxes for 'DRY CHEMICAL (Cartridge Type)', 'DRY CHEMICAL (Stored Pressure Type)', and 'PRESSURIZED WATER'. It also includes a 'RECHARGE RECORD' table with columns for DATE, BY, and DATE. The right section is the 'INSPECTION RECORD' table, which has columns for DATE, BY, and DATE. There are also checkboxes for 'Inspect this extinguisher carefully before signing' and 'Do not break seal except in case of emergency or to recharge or inspect contents'.

Monthly Inspection

Portable extinguishers should be visually inspected *monthly* to ensure:

- ☐ There is no damage to the cylinder or evidence of corrosion
- ☐ The pin and seal are intact
- ☐ Unit is sufficiently charged (if a gauge is present)
- ☐ It is mounted properly (handle placed 3 ½ to 5 feet above floor)
- ☐ Access is not blocked, and unit is ID'd with proper signage
- ☐ There are no missing fire extinguishers

As a best practice, the employee should note the date of the monthly inspection and initial.

This Alliant Risk Control Consulting fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.

SIGN-IN SHEET

TITLE OF COURSE/TRAINING: _____

TOPICS REVIEWED: _____

CONDUCTED BY: _____

LOCATION: _____ **DATE:** _____

[illegible]