

## **Fire Extinguisher Safety**

**Safety is the No. 1 priority during a fire. Flames and smoke can spread very quickly, sending a small fire out of control in seconds.**

While portable fire extinguishers can be of use during a small, contained fire that is caught in its initial stages, they do have limitations.

**If using a portable fire extinguisher, remember the following safety tips:**

*Courtesy of the [National Fire Protection Agency](#)*

**Only use a portable fire extinguisher when:**

- The fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket or stove pan.
- It is not growing.
- Everyone has exited the building.
- The fire department has been called or is being called.
- The room is not filled with smoke.

**To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:**

- **P**ull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism.
- **A**im low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- **S**weep the nozzle from side-to-side at the base of the fire.

Select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not too heavy.

Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of an independent testing laboratory.

Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out.

Install fire extinguishers close to an exit.

Keep your back to a clear exit when using an extinguisher so you can make an easy escape.

If the room fills with smoke, leave immediately.

Know when to go. Have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.