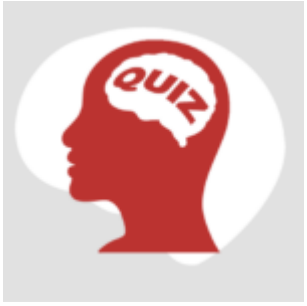
Fire Prevention Quiz



QUESTION

Why are fire alarm systems critical’

ANSWER

Fire alarms give an early signal to something that could be tragic. A fire alarm is able to alert you, even when you’re busy, working, or sleeping. You can take action before major damage takes place, saving property and more importantly lives.

The most common causes of commercial fires are cooking equipment, heating equipment, electrical and lighting equipment, smoking materials, and intentional fires. By knowing what may cause a commercial fire, business can take proper precautions to prevent damage to property.

WHY IS IT RIGHT

WORKPLACE SAFETY PROGRAM

Eliminating fire hazards is a central part of any **Workplace Safety Program.**

You must be constantly on the lookout for problems before fire breaks out (or an OSHA inspector finds them for you). Like most employers, you might form your workers into fire safety teams and have them conduct regular inspections. But you also need to ensure those teams know what they’re doing. That’s a training imperative if you want them to conduct a meaningful

inspection. The optimal inspection is the formation and implementation of a comprehensive

FIRE PREVENTION POLICY incorporates the following:

Emergency Plans

Tells how to evacuate in case of fire and how to account for all those evacuated. Fire drills based on the emergency plan will assist in understanding what to do during an emergency.

Fire Safety Equipment

Fire extinguishers, fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire sprinkler systems all play a vital role in fire prevention. It is important therefore to ensure that all equipment is in working order and in compliance with fire safety codes.

- The stipulated number of extinguishers are present (within 75 feet distance from any place in your facility).
- The size, rating, and type of fire extinguishers match the requirement for your kind of business. (At least a 2A-10BC size rating).
- The extinguishers, fire alarm panels, and fire sprinklers have been serviced and inspected within the previous 12 months.
- All extinguishers are mounted on the wall in keeping with the specified fire safety recommendations (the top of the unit must be no higher than 3.5 feet if extinguishers are greater than 40 pounds and 5 feet if lighter.)
- There are no warning lights on your fire alarm panel.
- There is adequate clearance around fire sprinkler deflectors (at least 18 inches, according to the NFPA).
- There are no signs of leakage, physical damage or corrosion on any of the equipment.
- The valves, hose connections, and water pressure are adequate to the requirements of the fire code.

Fire, Exit Routes

Ensure that there are no obstructions to people exiting the building in case of a fire emergency.

This includes pathways, exits, aisles, and walkways.

- At least two stipulated fire exits are present.
- All exit doors are unlocked at all times of occupancy.
- Aisles that lead to and away from fire exits are unobstructed.
- The pathway that leads to exit doors is wide enough (at least 36 inches wide.)
- Fire exits are provided with panic hardware.
- All doors to fire exits can be easily opened in case of emergency.
- Easy access to fire protection equipment like fire extinguishers and fire alarm control panel.
- The paths to the exits are well lit and clearly marked.
- The exit signs have backup batteries (to allow for a minimum of 90 minutes power backup) in case the lights go off during a fire emergency.

Good Practices for Fire Safety

Strictly adhering to compliance standards in the following areas can go a long way in ensuring fire prevention.

- All combustible materials are stored in fireproof cabinets.
- The number of people in your premises doesn’t exceed the maximum occupancy limits at any time.
- Electrical sockets are not overloaded and there are no improper multi-plug adapters used.
- All electrical panels are easily accessible and there are no obstructions to their use.
- All potentially flammable materials are kept away from electrical panels. (Usually, a 3 feet clearance is required.)

Regulation-Training

The underpinning of a successful and effective fire prevention is **Training.**

Employers should train workers about fire hazards in the workplace and about what to do in a fire emergency. If you want your workers to evacuate, you should train them on how to escape. If you expect your workers to use firefighting equipment, you should give them appropriate equipment and train them to use the equipment safely.

WHY IS EVERYTHING ELSE WRONG

Fire extinguishers play a key role in maintaining and controlling fires domestically and in commercial, industrial complexes. They have been found to save lives and property. But there is more than installation and use of fire extinguishers that is required. More attention to detail, demonstrates about fire extinguisher use is set out as follows:

Inspecting, Maintaining, and Testing Portable Fire Extinguishers

Damaged and drained extinguishers do more harm than good. An employee who relies on one to extinguish a fire is much more likely to be injured. To prevent this from happening, extinguishers must be visually inspected monthly, including their hoses. OSHA standards don’t specifically require that these inspections be documented; however, some employers have had a hard time proving that monthly inspections occurred without it. It’s a good idea to document the visual inspection on the extinguisher’s tag, just to be safe.

Annual maintenance checks are also required. These must be documented, and the record kept for one year after the last entry or the life of the shell.

Dry chemical extinguishers that require hydrostatic testing every 12 years, must be emptied and maintained every six years. Non-refillable, disposable containers are exempt from this requirement.

Hydrostatic testing is required based on the intervals on Table 1, unless the extinguisher has been damaged or repaired, and must be re-tested. All hydrostatic testing must be documented with the date of the test, signature of the person performing the test, and the serial number or unique identifier of the extinguisher that was tested. Documentation must be kept until the next hydrostatic testing, or until the extinguisher is removed from service.

Training and Educating Employees

If fire extinguishers are provided for employee use, then employers must provide an educational program to familiarize them with the general principles of fire extinguisher use and the hazards of fighting incipient stage fires. That training must emphasize that extinguishers cannot be used for large fires. Employees must be educated on fire extinguisher use when they are first hired, and re-educated annually.

If your emergency action plan designates employees to use firefighting equipment, they must be trained when they are first designated, and re-trained annually.

It should be evident that fire prevention requires careful planning and preparation. An employee armed with a portable fire extinguisher can stop a fire in its incipient stage before it becomes a catastrophic conflagration ‘ as long as employers do their part to educate employees and inspect, maintain, and test the fire extinguishers.