

Spot The Safety Violation: Some Items Just Aren't Multipurpose



Great idea to use this sprinkler head as a clothing rack, right'



Many workplaces are equipped with sprinkler systems that activate automatically in the event of a fire. But for these systems to function properly, you must avoid doing things that may interfere with their operation.

For example, as this picture illustrates, you should ensure that workers don't hang things such as clothing from sprinkler heads or other parts of the system.

Although it may not seem like a big deal, something as simple as hanging a sweater from a sprinkler head could cause it to fail in an emergency.

You should also ensure that when you store or stack materials, they don't block or interfere with the proper function of sprinkler heads.

Remember that the OHS laws require you to take steps to protect workers in the event of a fire in the workplace, which you can do through a fire safety plan that:

- Includes measures to control fire hazards, such as proper storage of explosives
- Spells out procedures in case of a fire, such as notifying the fire department and evacuating workers and others (including anyone who's disabled and may need special assistance)
- Identifies individuals designated to carry out specific duties and describes their duties
- Explains the training that must be provided to each individual with fire response duties
- Addresses the procedures for and frequency of fire drills to verify the effectiveness of the plan as well as identify and correct weaknesses.

The key to correctly operating a fire extinguisher is the mnemonic device 'PASS':

- **P**ull the pin. Some units require the releasing of a lock latch, pressing a puncture lever, inversion or other motion.
- **A**im the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the fire.
- **S**queeze or press the handle.
- **S**weep the extinguisher from side-to-side at the base of the fire and discharge the contents of the extinguisher.