
Fire Extinguisher Monthly Visual Inspection And Tagging

1.0 Objective & Intent

This SOP defines the safety protocols for conducting a monthly visual inspection and tagging of portable fire extinguishers throughout the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. The primary objective is to ensure each extinguisher is in its designated location, fully charged, unobstructed, and ready for immediate use in the event of a fire emergency. This procedure is mandated by WorkSafeBC regulations (OHS Guideline G4.20) and aligns with NFPA 10 standards for portable fire extinguishers. The specific risk mitigated by this SOP is the failure of fire extinguishing equipment during an emergency due to undetected damage, low pressure, or obstruction, which could lead to catastrophic fire spread, property loss, and worker injury.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all portable fire extinguishers located within the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility, including the main production floor, finishing and spray booth areas, lumber storage sheds, maintenance shop, warehouse, office areas, and all exterior building access points. It applies to all maintenance personnel, safety committee members, and designated fire extinguisher inspectors. This SOP covers all types of extinguishers present on site, including ABC dry chemical, CO2, and Class K extinguishers in the kitchen or break room. This procedure does not cover annual maintenance inspections or hydrostatic testing, which are performed by a certified external contractor.

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- Pinch Points: Extinguisher handles and locking pins can cause hand injuries if not handled carefully.
- Heavy Lifting: Extinguishers weigh up to 25 kg; improper lifting can cause back strain.
- Chemical Exposure: Dry chemical residue may irritate skin or eyes if contact occurs with damaged seals.
- Slip/Trip Hazards: Wet floors near extinguisher locations or cluttered storage areas.
- CSA-Approved Steel Toed Boots
- Safety Glasses with side shields
- Work gloves (cut-resistant, ANSI Level 3 or higher)
- High-visibility vest (when inspecting in traffic areas or near forklift routes)

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- Fire extinguisher inspection tag (pre-printed with date, inspector initials, and condition checkboxes)
- Inspection log sheet or digital inspection app (e.g., SafeDesk)
- Pen or permanent marker (waterproof)
- Flashlight (for inspecting hard-to-see areas and gauges)
- Small wire brush or cloth (for cleaning gauge faces and labels)
- Zip ties (for securing tags if needed)
- Camera or smartphone (for documenting damage or issues)
- Replacement tamper seals (if any are broken)

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. Notify the shift supervisor and all affected personnel that a monthly fire extinguisher inspection is in progress. Ensure no production activities that could create a fire hazard (e.g., welding, grinding) are occurring near the extinguisher being inspected.
2. Locate the fire extinguisher and visually confirm it is mounted on its designated bracket or cabinet and is unobstructed. Remove any boxes, tools, debris, or materials stored within 1 meter of the extinguisher. Ensure the extinguisher is accessible and the operating instructions are legible.
3. Inspect the extinguisher body for physical damage: dents, corrosion, rust, cracks, or leaks. Check the hose or nozzle for cracks, blockages, or damage. Verify the locking pin is intact and the tamper seal is unbroken. If any damage is found, immediately remove the extinguisher from service and tag it as 'DO NOT USE'.
4. Check the pressure gauge. For dry chemical and CO2 extinguishers, the needle must be in the green (operable) zone. If the needle is in the red (overcharged or undercharged), remove the extinguisher from service and arrange for recharge or replacement. For CO2 extinguishers without a gauge, weigh the unit and compare to the tare weight stamped on the cylinder; if weight loss exceeds 10%, remove from service.
5. Inspect the extinguisher label and operating instructions. Ensure they are legible and not faded, torn, or missing. Verify the extinguisher classification (e.g., ABC, CO2, Class K) matches the hazard type in its location (e.g., Class K in kitchen, ABC on production floor). If labels are damaged, contact the supplier for replacement.
6. Clean the extinguisher exterior and gauge face using a dry cloth or wire brush to remove dust, sawdust, or overspray. Do not use water or solvents. Ensure the gauge is readable and the nozzle is clear of obstructions.
7. Complete the inspection tag. Write the current date, your initials, and check off all condition boxes (e.g., 'In Place', 'Unobstructed', 'Full Charge', 'No Damage'). Attach the tag securely to the extinguisher handle using the provided wire or zip tie. If using a digital system like SafeDesk, log the inspection with a timestamp and photo of the gauge.
8. Record the inspection in the master fire extinguisher log. Note the extinguisher ID number, location, date, inspector name, and any deficiencies found. If a deficiency was identified, document the corrective action taken (e.g., 'Removed from service, replacement ordered').
9. Return the extinguisher to its designated location and ensure it is properly seated in the bracket. Confirm the bracket is securely mounted to the wall or cabinet. Do not block the extinguisher with any equipment or materials after inspection.
10. Report any extinguishers removed from service to the safety manager immediately. Coordinate with the maintenance supervisor to order replacement units or schedule professional servicing. Ensure a temporary fire extinguisher is placed in the area if the removed unit was the only one covering that zone.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.