

NFPA 10

Portable Fire Extinguishers

2010 Edition

Reference: 5.5.5 and 6.6.1

F.I. No.: 10-02-2

Background: NFPA 10, subsection 5.5.5 requires that fire extinguishers be provided for the protection of cooking appliances that use combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal oils and fats) be listed and labeled for Class K fires. Subsection 6.6.1 requires class K fire extinguishers be provided for hazards where there is a potential for fires involving combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal oils and fats). Based on these two requirements, there is confusion with regard to requiring class K extinguishers for stove top cooking.

Questions No. 1: Do subsections 5.5.5 and 6.6.1 require class K extinguishers to be installed for commercial fryers employing combustible cooking media (vegetable or animal oils and fats)?

Answer: Yes

Questions No. 2: Do subsections 5.5.5 and 6.6.1 require class K extinguishers to be installed for a griddle?

Answer: Yes

Questions No. 3: Do subsections 5.5.5 and 6.6.1 require class K extinguishers to be installed for a stove top frying pan?

Answer: Yes

Issue Edition: 2002

Reference: 4.2.3 and 5.7.1

Issue Date: July 7, 2005

Effective Date: July 27, 2005

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 5.5.5.3

F.I. No.: 10-98-3

Background: 5.5.5.3 A placard shall be conspicuously placed near the extinguisher that states that the fire protection system shall be activated prior to using the fire extinguisher.

Question: Is it the intent of the Committee that the instructions on this placard apply to all Class K fires including those other than the deep fryer fires?

Answer: Yes.

Issue Edition: 1998

Reference: 2-3.2.1

Issue Date: January 22, 2002

Effective Date: February 11, 2002

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2, 6.2.1.5

F.I. 84-2

Background: During regular maintenance of fire extinguishers in an apartment building, it was found that extinguishers were provided on the main or ground level floor and not on the second floor or basement level. The apartment proprietors explained that the rationale for not providing extinguishers on the second or basement level was that the extinguishers on the main level are within the 75-ft maximum travel distance, if the stairway is included in the calculations.

Question: Does NFPA 10 prohibit the inclusion of a flight(s) of stairs in the calculation of travel distance?

Answer: Yes. Travel distance is intended to reflect the time it takes to respond with an extinguisher to a fire emergency. A staircase slows down response time. Furthermore, there could well be interference to obtaining and transporting the extinguisher from tenants vacating the premises. Paragraph 6.1.3.1 states, "Extinguishers shall be conspicuously located where they will be readily accessible and immediately available in the event of fire," and 6.1.3.3.1 states, "Fire extinguishers shall not be obstructed or obscured from view." Extinguishers located on another floor do not meet the intent of these paragraphs.

Issue Edition: 1984

Reference: 3-2.1, 3-2.3

Date: October 1984

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 7.1.2.1, 7.1.2.2, 7.3.1.1.1, 7.3.2.1.2
F.I. No.: 10-98-1

Background: Some people claim that a maintenance procedure that does not require internal maintenance is essentially the same as a monthly inspection procedure, so only minimal knowledge is required and no special training.

Some people claim persons performing the external examination required by 7.3.2.1.2 need special training, the manufacturer's maintenance manual, repair parts, and appropriate servicing equipment.

Question: Subparagraph 7.3.1.1.1 requires extinguishers to undergo maintenance annually. Subparagraph 7.3.2.1.2 requires certain extinguishers to be examined externally only. Are individuals conducting this external maintenance required to be trained in accordance with 7.1.2.1 and 7.1.2.2?

Answer: Yes.

Issue Edition: 1998
Reference: 4-1.4, 4-4.1, and 4-4.2
Issue Date: December 15, 1998
Effective Date: January 4, 1999

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 7.2.4.4

F.I. No.: 10-02-1

Background: Inspection authorities (fire officials, JCAHO, etc.) have and can interpret NFPA 10, 7.2.4.4 fairly stringently due to its current wording. One inspection authority has interpreted this section to require our facilities to keep monthly tags on every fire extinguisher in perpetuity because NFPA 10, 7.2.4.4 currently requires “Records for manual inspections shall be kept on a tag or label attached to the fire extinguisher, or an inspection checklist maintained on file, or by an electronic method.”

Questions No. 1: Where records are kept on a tag or label attached to a fire extinguisher, do the records need to be kept permanently?

Answer: No

Questions No. 2: Where records are kept on a tag or label attached to a fire extinguisher, do the records need to be kept permanently attached to the extinguisher?

Answer: No

Questions No. 3: Where records are kept on an inspection checklist, do the records need to be kept permanently?

Answer: No

Questions No. 4: Where records are kept by an electronic method, do the records need to be kept permanently?

Answer: No

Issue Edition: 2002

Reference: 6.2.4.3

Issue Date: February 23, 2004

Effective Date: March 13, 2004

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 7.3.1.1.1

F.I. No.: 10-98-2

Background: Some people interpret 7.3.1.1.1 to mean that it is acceptable either to do maintenance at yearly intervals or to do maintenance when an inspection specifically indicates the need. Either program will satisfy NFPA 10 requirements.

Question: Is it the intent of 7.3.1.1.1 that all fire extinguishers should be subjected to maintenance at a maximum interval of not more than 1 year?

Answer: Yes.

Issue Edition: 1998

Reference: 4-4.1

Issue Date: December 15, 1998

Effective Date: January 4, 1999

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Reference: 7.3.2

F.I. 84-5

Background: Subsection 7.3.2 states: “Maintenance procedures shall include a thorough examination of the basic elements of fire extinguishers and components of the electronic monitoring system as determined below and following the procedures detailed in the manufacturer service manual:

- (1) Mechanical parts of all fire extinguishers
- (2) Extinguishing agent of cartridge- or cylinder-operated dry chemical, stored-pressure, loaded stream, and pump tank fire extinguishers
- (3) Expelling means of all fire extinguishers
- (4) Physical appearance
- (5) Components of electronically monitored system”

Referring now to Annex I, Table I.1(a), “Mechanical Parts Maintenance Checklist,” calls for a check of “Gas Tube and Siphon or Pickup Tube” and Table I.1(b), “Agent and Expelling Means Maintenance Checklist,” calls for a check of “Agent Condition (contamination, caking, or wrong agent).”

Question: To do the above two check points, is it the intent to require emptying, annually, a cartridge-operated dry chemical extinguisher?

Answer: No.

Issue Edition: 1984

Reference: 4-4.2

Date: March 1986

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Reference: 7.4.1.4

F.I. 84-3

Background: A system has been submitted to a laboratory for listing that is intended for the rebuilding of 2 ½-gallon, stainless steel, stored-pressure, water fire extinguishers that were manufactured in 1964 or later. The extinguishers would be thoroughly inspected and tested, fitted with a new hose and solid AFFF cartridge nozzle, and relabeled. No modifications would be made to the internal parts of the extinguisher, and the extinguisher charge remains exactly as originally designed. The entire operation would be subjected to follow-up inspections by the testing laboratory and accomplished only at locations authorized by the laboratory. The rating of the extinguisher is upgraded from 2-A to 3-A:40-B, thus providing the owner of the extinguisher with a significant increase in fire extinguishing capability. A laboratory has accepted the system for test but is unlikely to list it until the question of possible conflict with 7.4.1.4 is answered.

Question 1: Is it the intent of 7.4.1.4 to prohibit field alteration or conversion of listed portable extinguishers from one type to another?

Answer: Yes.

Issue Edition: 1984

Reference: 4-5.3.8

Date: January 1985

Reissued to correct error: January 1986

Formal Interpretation

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Reference: 8.3.1

F.I. 84-1

Background: A 12-year testing interval has been used when portable CO₂ fire extinguishers have not been discharged. Consequently, this procedure has saved a considerable amount of time and money.

Question: Is it the intent of 8.3.1 that all portable CO₂ fire extinguishers be hydrostatically tested every 5 years, regardless of whether or not they have been discharged?

Answer: Yes.

Issue Edition: 1984

Reference: 5-2

Date: June 1984