

# Important Fire Extinguisher Codes

## Introduction

This document provides a summary of the most relevant California state codes that apply to fire extinguishers in R2 residences. This is only intended as a guide and should not be used for any legal means, as it is not the full code. Sections have been deleted to only present the basics that apply to R2 occupancies. For any legal purposes, please consult the published code directly, or contact our fire marshal Ed Laidlaw (707-825-2000).

## Title 19 Public Safety

### Division 1 State Fire Marshal

#### Chapter 3 – Fire Extinguishers

### Article 5. Selection and Distribution of Portable Fire Extinguishers

#### § 568. Fire Extinguisher Size and Placement for **Class A Hazards**.

(a) Minimum sizes of fire extinguisher for the listed grades of hazards shall be provided on the basis of Table 2, except as modified by Section 568(d). Extinguishers shall be located so that the maximum travel distances shall not exceed those specified in Table 2, except as modified by Section 568(d).

Table 2  
Light (Low) Hazard Occupancy

Minimum rated single extinguisher	2-A (See Note 1)
Maximum floor area per unit of A	3,000 sq ft
Maximum floor area for extinguisher	11,250 sq ft
Maximum travel distance to extinguisher	75 ft

*Note 1: This table is just for Class A which covers general combustibles. Extinguishers for R2 occupancies must also be rated for Class B which covers combustible gases and liquids, and for Class C which covers electrical fires. Therefore, the full spec for a minimum rated fire extinguisher is one rated **2A 10BC**.*

## Article 6. Inspection, Maintenance and Recharging

### § 574.1. Frequency of Inspection.

Fire extinguishers shall be manually inspected when initially placed in service. Thereafter extinguishers shall be manually inspected at **least monthly by the building owner, occupant, or his/her authorized agent** or electronically monitored. Fire extinguishers shall be inspected at more frequent intervals when circumstances require as determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

### § 574.2. Inspection Procedures.

(a) In addition to 574.1 fire extinguishers shall be manually inspected in accordance with this section if they are located where any of the following conditions exist:

- (1) High frequency of fires in the past.
- (2) Extra (high) hazard areas.
- (3) Location that make fire extinguishers susceptible to mechanical or physical damage.
- (4) Exposure to abnormal temperatures or corrosive atmospheres.

(b) **Manual inspection of extinguishers shall include a check of at least the following items:**

- (1) Located in designated place.
- (2) No obstruction to access or visibility.
- (3) Operating instructions on nameplate legible and facing outward.
- (4) Safety seals and tamper indicators not broken or missing.
- (5) Examine for obvious physical damage, corrosion, leakage or clogged nozzle.
- (6) Pressure gauge reading or indicator in the operable range or position.
- (7) Fullness determined by weighing or hefting.
- (8) For wheeled units, the condition of tires, wheels, carriage, hose, and nozzle shall also be checked.
- (9) For non-rechargeable extinguishers using push-to-test pressure indicators, test the indicator.

### § 574.3. Corrective Action.

When an inspection of any extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in Section 574.2(b)(c), **immediate corrective action** shall be taken.

### § 574.4. Nonrechargeable Extinguishers.

When an inspection of any nonrechargeable fire extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) or (9) of Section 574.2(b), it shall be discharged and removed from service.

### **§ 574.5. Inspection Record Keeping.**

(a) The fire extinguisher owner shall maintain records of all fire extinguishers inspected, including those extinguishers that were found to require corrective actions. Records shall be maintained until next required maintenance.

(b) At least monthly, the date the manual inspection was performed and the initials of the person performing the inspection shall be recorded on a tag or label attached to the fire extinguisher, or an inspection checklist maintained on file, or an electronic system (e.g. bar coding) that provides a permanent record.

### **§ 575.1. Maintenance and Required Service Intervals.**

(a) Fire extinguishers shall be subjected to maintenance annually as described in this chapter or immediately after use or when specifically indicated by an inspection or at the time of hydrostatic test. For purposes of maintenance, hydrostatic tests required during the same calendar year shall be performed at the time of the annual maintenance or recharge.

(b) Non-rechargeable fire extinguishers shall not be recharged or hydrostatically tested but shall be discharged and removed from service at a maximum interval of 12 years from the date of manufacture.

EXCEPTION: Non-rechargeable fire extinguishers containing a halogenated agent shall be removed from service, not discharged, and returned to the manufacturer or fire extinguisher distributor having the capability of recovering the halogenated agent.

(c) When additional fire extinguishers are installed in excess of those required, the additional extinguishers shall be subjected to maintenance and hydrostatically tested in the same manner and at intervals as set forth in this chapter for required extinguishers.

(d) New fire extinguishers that are fully charged by the manufacturer shall, after being sold, be subjected to maintenance within one year from the date of manufacture in accordance with this chapter. If only the year is shown, the new extinguisher shall be due for maintenance by January 1st of the year following the year of manufacture in accordance with this chapter.

EXCEPTION: A licensed fire extinguisher concern may attach the tag described in Section 596.1(a) and punch the new extinguisher block and date the extinguisher was sold. Extinguishers tagged in this manner shall be subjected to maintenance one year from the date on the tag in accordance with this chapter. Extinguishers more than two years old from date of manufacture shall not be tagged as new extinguishers.

### **§ 575.10. Out of Service.**

Fire extinguishers removed from service for maintenance or recharge shall be replaced by fire extinguishers suitable for the type of hazard protected and shall be of at least equal rating.

# Title 24 Building Code

## Chapter 9 Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems

### Section 906 Portable Fire Extinguishers

#### **906.1 Where Required**

Portable fire extinguishers shall be installed in all of the following locations:

1. In new and existing Group A, B, E, F, H, I, L, M, R-1, R-2, R-2.1, R-2.2, R-3.1, R-4 and S occupancies.

Exceptions:

1. In Group R-2 occupancies, portable fire extinguishers shall be required only in locations specified in Items 2 through 6 where each dwelling unit is provided with a portable fire extinguisher having a minimum rating of 1-A:10-B:C.