

FIRE AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The following information will provide you with a guide to help prevent a potential fire, as well as the procedures to follow if a fire should occur.

A. FIRE PREVENTION

The key to prevention is early detection of any source of fire. Here are some ways to prevent a fire at your work location:

No smoking.

Devices which make heat (lamps, etc) should not be placed where they can cause combustion.

All doors, stairs and corridors should be unobstructed.

Exits should be marked with lighted exit signs.

Emergency lighting should be checked once a month to be sure that it is working properly.

Doors should not be held open with wedges.

Rubbish should be emptied and accumulation avoided.

Air-conditioning filters should be checked, cleaned or replaced according to manufacturer's recommendations.

No portable heaters should be in use.

Maintain clean and clear rooms.

Report buildup of trash to be removed.

Keep 18" between storage space and fire sprinklers.

Flammable liquids (acetone, alcohol, benzine, etc..) should be stored and disposed of in proper receptacles. Keep the amount of these liquids to a minimum in your working area.

Avoid any storage near heaters or furnaces.

Keep doorways, stairs and hallways unobstructed.

Report all exit signs that are not lit.

Become familiar with fire exits and extinguisher in the building.

Never use exits, hallways or aisles for storage. All exits must remain clear to allow for orderly exit. Report lighting if not sufficient so that exits may be found. Keep individual heaters at work areas clear of combustible materials such as drapes or waste from wastebaskets.

Use newer heaters that are equipped with tip-over switches.

Keep appliances such as coffeepots or microwave ovens in working order and inspect them for signs of wear, heat or frayed cords.

B. WHAT TO DO IF A FIRE OCCURS

If a fire occurs, the following procedure, commonly referred to as the "**RACE**" procedure, should be initiated immediately and in the following order:

R - Rescue employees / patients in immediate danger if fire is small and you can do so without endangering yourself.

A - Activate the fire alarm, call 911 or use the facility code for fire.

C - Close room doors and hall doors to stop air movement and the spread of smoke.

E - Extinguish the fire, if you can do so safely, using the "**PASS**" principle:

1. **P** - Pull pin

2. **A** - Aim the nozzle

3. **S** - Squeeze the handle

4. **S** - Sweep at the base of the fire

C. FIRE EXTINGUISHER SAFETY

Fire extinguishers are made to handle different types of fires. Here is a list of the different types of extinguishers and the class of fire they extinguish.

Class "A" Extinguisher: A water filled extinguisher, usually 2.5 gallons or more. Class "A" Fire: Defined as a fire involving ordinary combustibles (paper, wood, mattress, plastics, clothing, etc.). A class "A" extinguisher works best on this type of fire because of its penetrating and cooling effect.

Class "B" Extinguisher: A carbon dioxide (CO₂) extinguisher, foam and dry powder. These extinguishers have essentially a smoldering effect separating oxygen in the air from the burning fuel. Class "B" Fire: Defined as fires involving flammable liquids, greases, etc. When a blanket or smothering effect is necessary to extinguish the fire, a class "B" extinguisher is the most desirable. NOTE: Never use a class "A" extinguisher on a class "B" fire, as it can intensify and spread the fire, causing great injury to oneself and others.

Class "C" Extinguisher: A carbon dioxide (CO₂) and / or dry powder extinguisher. These types of extinguishers have a non-conducting medium as an extinguishing agent. Class "C" Fire: Defined as fires involving electricity and / or equipment. Class "C" extinguisher is best used on this type of fire because of its non-conductive agents.

Additional Fire Extinguisher Facts:

A dry powder extinguisher is considered a universal extinguisher. It can put out any class of fire effectively. All extinguishers should have a tag with a date on it and a plastic seal around the pin. If the plastic seal is missing, the extinguisher should be replaced or recharged immediately. If an extinguisher is used for anything, it must be replaced or recharged immediately. Always stay between the fire and your exit.

D. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

The key to prevention is an early detection of major sources of electrical hazards.

Check electrical appliances, outlets and cords for wear and tear.

Inspect electrical devices prior to use. Check for bent prongs, loose areas where cord and plug join or split frayed wires.

Check outlets for overloaded circuits.

Keep area near electrical equipment dry: water conducts electricity. Do not use any electrical equipment with wet hands.

Be sure electrical equipment is placed on dry surfaces. Do not place liquids on top of electrical devices.

No wires should be in doorways, windows or under rugs.

Electrical outlets should not be overloaded.

Appliances brought in by employees or visitors should be checked for safety.

No cords should be in doorways or down stairs.

Electrical appliances and cords should be checked often and not used if they show wear and tear.

Clean up spills immediately.

REMINDER

Please ask to see each facility's procedures regarding electrical safety and, in particular, fire safety on the first day of your assignment and periodically review that information. Codes and procedures change from facility to facility.

Don't assume anything when it comes to emergencies. Many facilities in California are requiring Fire Cards so if you have a current Fire Card, please mail a copy to Preferred Healthcare.

SUMMATION

Be sure to recognize when you cause one of these hazardous situations and when the environment is a potential hazard. Care, observation, and awareness of your surroundings are a major aspect of prevention. Once awareness of a potential hazard is noted, steps should be taken to change the situation. Awareness of dangers will allow for one to take preventative measures. Prevention controls the possibility of danger.

OSHA Fire and Safety Information:

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/firesafety/>

California Fire Safety Information:

<http://www.ca.gov/HomeFamily/Safety/PersonalSafety/Environmental/FireSafety.html>