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FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSPECTION PROGRAM

The buildings on the main campus of the University of Houston have approximately 6,000 fire extinguishers in place for use by building occupants. The fire code requires a fire extinguisher to be within 75 feet travel distance from any point in a building. Most of these extinguishers are the multi-purpose ABC type extinguishers. Commercial kitchens on campus also have a class K extinguisher for fires involving grease. Laboratories with combustible metals utilize class D extinguishers since water or other agents will not extinguish these types of fires.

The UH Fire Marshal’s Office employs one Fire Safety Technician to inspect and maintain the campus fire extinguishers. His job requires that he inspect all 6,000 fire extinguishers twice a year. This biannual inspection entails inspecting the extinguisher for damage, checking the pressure gauge, hose, and six year maintenance date. If any extinguisher is found to be at the six year maintenance date, that extinguisher is taken out of service and replaced.

Any extinguisher at the six year maintenance date requires an internal inspection. This inspection requires disassembly of the extinguisher, removal of extinguishing agent, external and internal inspection and cleaning of the tank and all internal parts, refilling and recharging of the extinguisher.

Every twelve years extinguishers require a hydrostatic test of the tank. This is the only maintenance that the university does not perform in house. These extinguishers receive a six year disassembly and inspection by UH’s Fire Safety Technician prior to being sent to a vendor for hydrostatic testing. After testing is complete the returned, extinguisher tanks and reassembled and recharged.

In addition meticulous records of all service, maintenance, and inspections performed on all fire extinguishers must be kept. Fire extinguishers are often the first line of defense when fires are in the incipient stage. When properly maintained and used they can save lives and property.

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning
and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 38,500 students in the nation’s fourth-largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.