

EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

December 2018

Know your fires and extinguishers

There are five categories of fires and fire extinguishers, and each is designed for different types of fire. They are labeled with either letters or symbols that indicate what types of fires they are intended for.

Class A fires involve ordinary combustible materials, such as cloth, wood, paper, rubber, and many plastics, and these require a water extinguisher labeled "A."

Class B fires involve flammable liquids, such as gasoline, alcohol, oil-based paints, and lacquers. These require an extinguisher labeled "B."

Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment and require an extinguisher labeled "C."

Class D fires involve combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, and sodium. These fires require a special extinguisher labeled "D."

Class K fires involve vegetable oils, animal oils, or fats in and around cooking appliances, and these require an extinguisher labeled "K."

Multipurpose extinguishers with an ABC label are suitable for use with fires involving ordinary combustibles, flammable liquids, and energized electrical equipment. They should include a symbol for each hazard type.

Do not attempt to extinguish a fire involving flammable gas without first shutting off the source, which is the best way to extinguish it. Otherwise, unburned gas will escape, which could cause a buildup and create the potential for an explosion.



"I think this one's over-inflated."

Prepare to drive safely in winter conditions

Driving in winter presents a host of challenges, not the least of which is remembering how tricky it is to drive in slick conditions. So, it's good to begin your safe winter driving practices before you even leave your driveway. Winter's snow, ice, and cold temperatures pose a unique set of challenges that interfere with your vehicle's performance, creating a hazard for you, your passengers, and other drivers on the road.

Before you get on the road, it is important to have your vehicle in good condition and equipped for winter driving. Begin by inspecting or having your mechanic inspect the following items:

- **Tire pressure.** Make sure your tires are inflated to the correct air pressure, as cold weather can cause tire pressure to drop. Check your tire pressure frequently.
- **Tire tread and traction.** Check the tread on your tires, and replace them if the tread is worn. If you live in an area where snowy roads are a frequent concern, snow tires or properly installed tire chains are other options.
- **Fluids.** Check the levels of your windshield washer fluid, oil, antifreeze (coolant), brake fluid, and power steering fluid.
- **Gas.** Keeping your gas tank at least half full will prevent your gas line from freezing.
- **Brakes.** Test them to ensure they are in working order. If possible, practice stopping on snow and ice in a safe place to become familiar with how your vehicle performs.
- **Lights and signals.** Check that your headlights, high beams, taillights, brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights are functioning properly. Clean exterior lights if they are dirty.
- **Windshield wipers.** Make sure your front and rear windshield wipers are in good working condition. Replace the wiper blades if they are worn.
- **Heater/defroster.** Make sure the heater is functioning properly and that the defroster removes condensation and frost from your windshield.
- **Battery.** Have your mechanic check your battery for sufficient voltage, and inspect the charging system, belts, and cable connections.

You should assemble an emergency kit to keep in your vehicle in case you become stranded or experience mechanical difficulty. This is a good idea year-round, but it is very important in winter because of the increased chance that you could get stranded in hazardous weather conditions.

Your winter emergency kit should include:

- Blankets and warm, dry extra clothes
- Water and nonperishable food
- Essential medications
- Ice scraper, snow brush, and small snow shovel
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Jumper cables
- Container of sand or kitty litter for traction if you get stuck in snow or ice
- Emergency flares or triangles
- Inflated spare tire, tire jack, and tools
- Cell phone and car charger
- Extra windshield washer fluid

york.

Should you fight that fire?

In the event of a fire, your most important decision is whether to fight the flames with an extinguisher or evacuate the building immediately. When you are not trained in portable extinguisher use, the answer is easy: Evacuate immediately.

If you are trained with extinguishers, however, there are many things to consider when deciding whether to fight or take flight. But before you decide, pull the fire alarm to notify others in the building of the emergency.

Small fires can often be put out quickly by a well-trained employee with a portable fire extinguisher.

Fight

If you decide to attempt to extinguish the fire, take the following actions:

- Position yourself between the fire and your escape route.
- Get the fire extinguisher.
- Back away from an extinguished fire in case it flames up again.
- Evacuate immediately if the extinguisher is empty and the fire is not out.
- Evacuate immediately if the fire becomes bigger.

Remember the acronym PASS:

1. **P**—*Pull* the pin that unlocks the operating handle.
2. **A**—*Aim* the extinguisher low at the base of the fire.
3. **S**—*Squeeze* the lever on the extinguisher to discharge the agent.
4. **S**—*Sweep* the nozzle or hose from side to side, aiming at the base of the flames until the fire is out or the extinguisher is empty.



Safe winter driving: Quiz

1. It is important to check your tire pressure frequently in the winter. **True or False**
2. There's no need to have your battery checked. If it was working throughout the summer and fall, it should be fine in winter. **True or False**
3. Which of the following should *not* be included in a winter emergency kit?
 - a. A container of sand or kitty litter for traction
 - b. Blankets and warm, dry extra clothes
 - c. A giant foam hand to help wave down passing cars
 - d. A first-aid kit and any essential medications you may need
4. You should try to keep your gas tank at least half full. **True or False**
5. Tire chains are an option for maintaining traction on snowy roads. **True or False**

Answers: 1. **True.** Every 10 degrees of temperature drop equates to a drop of 1–2 PSI. Be sure to keep tires properly inflated to maintain handling and traction. 2. **False.** It is important to have a mechanic inspect not only the battery but also the charging system, belts, and cable connections. 3. **C.** Rather than a foam hand, keep a cell phone and car charger handy to call for a tow or 911 in an emergency. 4. **True.** Keeping less than half a tank of gas in your vehicle can potentially lead to freezing of the gas line. 5. **True.** When properly installed, tire chains are one option to keep you safe on snowy roads.

Preventing frostbite in cold working conditions

Working outside in cold, windy weather can pose serious risks, but the good news is that at least one of these risks is easily preventable. Frostbite happens when your skin freezes from exposure to severe cold or contact with very cold objects, damaging cells and blood vessels. The freezing point for skin is about 30 degrees Fahrenheit. Usually, frostbite affects the fingers, toes, cheeks, nose, and ears. In severe cases, frostbite causes tissue death, which can require amputation or lead to a loss of function in that body part.

Follow these precautions to help prevent frostbite:

- In cold conditions, especially if it is also windy, cover as much of your skin as possible by wearing gloves, a hat or hood, a scarf, and other warm clothing. Make sure to protect your ears, face, hands, and feet.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots and warm socks.
- If you can, wear mittens rather than gloves because they keep your hands warmer. If you must wear gloves to do your job, they should be insulated and waterproof.
- Dress in several layers of loose, warm clothing. Choose moisture-wicking materials (instead of cotton). Make sure your clothing is not cutting off blood circulation.
- Remove wet clothing, and change into dry clothing as soon as possible.
- Avoid touching cold metal surfaces with bare skin.

york.