



## 1 IN 300 HOMES HAS A FIRE SERIOUS ENOUGH TO CALL THE FIRE DEPT

Although you hope that your fire extinguisher will sit on the wall for years, collecting dust, it also could end up saving your property – *and your life.*



Portable fire extinguishers are the first line of defense against fires of limited size and should be in your home and office.



With National Fire Prevention Month coming up in October and the City's continued efforts to be more sustainable, here are some reminders about fire safety and the use and disposal of extinguishers:

- Check the batteries in all smoke detectors
- Place portable fire extinguishers in key locations
- Inspect and recharge fire extinguishers
- Ensure all family members know what to do when the smoke detector goes off



### Inspect extinguisher(s) at least monthly to make sure:



- The extinguisher is not blocked by objects that could interfere with access in an emergency.
- The pressure is at the recommended level. For extinguishers equipped with a gauge, the needle should be in the green zone.
- The nozzle or other parts are not obstructed.
- The pin and tamper seal are intact.
- There are no dents, leaks, rust, chemical deposits and other signs of abuse/wear. Wipe off corrosive chemicals, oil, gunk etc. that may have landed on the extinguisher.



Proper disposal of a fire extinguisher is important. Be sure the extinguisher has been completely discharged; otherwise it may still be pressurized and pose a potential danger. If the extinguisher is empty, remove the valve, or head, of the portable fire extinguisher. If the valve or head is plastic discard it in the trash, along with any residual powder. The powder is non-toxic – although dry chemical fire extinguishers may cause irritation – *use caution*. If the valve is brass or aluminum, recycle it along with the steel body at the Recycling Center with scrap metal. If the extinguisher has a glass bubble on the top, it is a much-older version no longer in production that is considered hazardous because it may contain carbon tetrachloride and/or halon. These extinguishers should be brought to Household Hazardous Waste Day for disposal.

Rechargeable fire extinguishers are more sustainable for the environment. They are of higher quality; have an average of 12 years shelf life; and can be recharged verses throwing it out and adding to the waste stream. Fire extinguishers should be pressure tested (a process called hydrostatic testing) after a number of years to guarantee it will work when you need it most. If the extinguisher is damaged or needs recharging, get it replaced **immediately!**

For more information on fire safety, contact Deputy Chief Steve Griswold at the Portsmouth Fire Department, 610-7345. For more information on proper disposal of fire extinguishers contact, Silke Psula at Public Works 766-1454.

