

Safety Bulletin

4 Things to Know About Your Fire Extinguisher

You wouldn't dream of starting your route without checking your gas gauge or tires. But when was the last time you checked your onboard fire extinguisher?

According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), all commercial motor vehicles must carry at least one working onboard fire extinguisher. Vehicles hauling hazardous materials must have an extinguisher with an Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) rating of 10 B:C or more.

Vehicles transporting non-hazardous materials must have one extinguisher with a UL rating of 5 B:C or more, or two extinguishers, each of which with a UL rating of 4 B:C or more.



To ensure your extinguisher is ready in the event of a fire, follow these tips:

- 1. Check the charge** – Rechargeable extinguishers have a metal head and a gauge that reads charge/recharge. Disposable extinguishers have a plastic head and a gauge that reads full/empty. If the needle on your onboard extinguisher's gauge is in the "red zone" (recharge or empty), recharge or replace it immediately.
- 2. Make sure it's mounted** – Onboard extinguishers must be located in a readily accessible area of your truck and must be securely mounted to prevent sliding or rolling.
- 3. Know how to use it** – If a fire breaks out, remember **PASS**:
 - **P**ull the pin – Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from your body, then release the locking mechanism.
 - **A**im low – Point the extinguisher toward the base of the fire.
 - **S**queeze – Do so slowly and evenly.
 - **S**weep – Move the nozzle from side-to-side.

Also, act quickly. It takes only 8 seconds for a fire extinguisher to dispel all of its contents.