



About the National Safety Council:



The National Safety Council saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy. Visit us at nsc.org for up-to-date industry news, information and tools to take your safety program to the next level.

Welcome to *Spotlight on Safety*, an e-newsletter brought to you by the Department of the Interior Office of Occupational Safety and Health in partnership with the National Safety Council. We hope you will find this service of value. Send feedback or ideas on topics you would like to see to membershipinfo@nsc.org. Please put "Department of the Interior feedback" in the subject line.

5-Minute Safety Talk

A Guide to Portable Fire Extinguishers



Does your organization have fire extinguishers? Do you know where they are or how to use them? Portable fire extinguishers can be very effective in combating small fires, but only if you know how to use them. This [5-minute Safety Talk](#) covers the types of fire extinguishers, proper placement and other fire safety considerations.

Featured Safety Poster:



[Tips for Fire Safety at Your Organization](#)

Share this poster with your employees to remind them what they can do to reduce the chance of injury or death due to fire.

Fire Safety is a Hot Topic in October

National Fire Prevention Week was established in 1922 to commemorate the [Great Chicago Fire](#), which began on Oct. 8, 1871, killed about 250 people and leveled more than 17,000 structures, according to the [National Fire Protection Association](#). (Incidentally, it wasn't the biggest fire that day. Check out what happened during the [Peshtigo fire in Wisconsin](#).)



Whichever historic conflagration you choose to commemorate, Fire Prevention Week, held the second week in October, serves to remind us that even a small fire can rage out of control in minutes and lead to significant injuries and deaths. In 2013, 2,200 people died from burns and other injuries caused by fire, with hundreds of these fires occurring at work, according to Injury Facts 2015.

Some Workplaces Highly Combustible

No industry is immune to fire, but some require more stringent precautions than others. Here are just a few industry-specific materials and processes that can be fire-starters:

- **Dust:** Sawmills, automobile manufacturers, grain elevators, power plants and even sugar refineries produce powders and dust that can cause massive explosions, fire and loss of life
- **Arc welding:** Hazards include accumulation of toxic gases, showers of sparks and drops of molten metal
- **Paint and flammable liquids:** Often found on construction sites, and in warehouses and industrial plants, flammable liquids, if not stored properly, can be highly combustible
- **Portable heaters** and electrical devices: Used frequently by outdoor workers - but also found in many offices - portable heaters result in hundreds of fires each year

Should You Develop an Emergency Action Plan?

While not all employers are required to establish an emergency action plan, National Safety Council recommends developing one in cooperation with management and employees. The plan should:

- Clearly identify an evacuation route and assembly location in case of fire
- Establish a method for reporting fires
- Include names and phone numbers of all employees for a head count after evacuation
- Be readily available for every employee to read and be practiced regularly
- Designate employees to shut down critical operations, perform medical duties or operate fire extinguishers

Get to Know your Local Firefighters

The [OSHA Small Business Handbook](#) provides a number of other fire safety tips for employers:

- Make sure your local fire department is familiar with your facility and its specific hazards
- Have the automatic sprinkler system and fire alarm inspected regularly
- Conduct a fire risk assessment with particular attention to ignition sources (like sparks) and fuel sources (like oily rags) are properly safeguarded and stored
- Practice industrial hygiene to prevent buildup of dust and other flammable materials
- Provide the right type of fire extinguisher; different classes are available for different types of fires
- Make sure fire extinguishers are properly located and free from obstructions

Make Fire Safety a Priority Off the Job

Featured Webinar



Visit our [Online Learning Library](#) to view our extensive webinar selection.

This month's suggested topic: "Implementing NFPA 70E for Arc Flash. Find the webinar under the "Workplace Safety" tab.

NSC Safety Awards



Employee engagement is key to a successful safety program! An award from the National Safety Council shows them you appreciate their efforts.

Safety awards from NSC instill employee pride; earn respect from your customers, community and peers; and place you one step ahead of your competition.

[Learn more.](#)

Learn about all the benefits available to you in our Member Benefits Guide



If your home is not equipped with smoke detectors in every bedroom and on every level, you could be doing more to protect your family. Working smoke alarms cut in half the chances of dying in a house fire, according to Injury Facts 2015.



Hear the Beep where you Sleep is the theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 4-10. NFPA research tells us that about half of home fire deaths result from fires reported between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

NSC offers more on fire safety at home, including safety tips, how to treat burns and a home safety checklist.

[See the benefits that are available to you and ALL your employees](#)