



Curatorial Safety

Annual Fire Extinguisher Training

Portable fire extinguisher training is an important life safety and resource protection tool. If a park employee (who has received proper fire extinguisher training) can safely respond to a small fire in time with the appropriate portable fire extinguisher, it's possible that s/he can extinguish the fire before it starts to spread. All National Park Service museum personnel are required to be trained to properly use a portable fire extinguisher in an emergency. (See NPS Museum Checklist standard F3: "Staff is trained in the use of fire extinguishers.")

Not only are all NPS museum staff required to be properly trained in fire extinguisher use, but virtually all other NPS employees are required to have the training as well: if the park, center, or office has portable fire extinguishers for employees to use in an emergency, then the employer must provide proper training in their use. OSHA Regulation Standard 29CFR, Standard Number 1910.157G1 states:

“When the employer has provided portable fire extinguishers for employee use in the workplace, the employer shall also provide an educational program to familiarize employees with the general principles of fire extinguisher use and other hazards involved with incipient stage fire fighting.”

This training must be held every year for all employees. Standard Number 1910.157G2 states:

“The employer shall employ the education required upon initial employment and at least annually thereafter.”

Fire extinguisher training is oftentimes conducted for park staff by the park's fire brigade or the local fire department. However, now there is another option. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has a video presentation concerning portable fire extinguisher use, *Fire Extinguishers at Work*. Watching this video satisfies the annual OSHA training requirement. National Park Service units can contact their regional Structural Fire Management Officer to borrow a copy of this video for training purposes. Non-NPS museums, historic sites, and the general public can contact the NFPA to purchase a copy of the video at: National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269, (617) 770-3000, www.nfpa.org.

Another great resource is NFPA's Fire Extinguisher Fact Sheet, available on the web at <http://www.nfpa.org/Research/NFPAFactSheets/FireExtinguishers/FireExtinguishers.asp>.