

Safety

Please review the Safety and Waste and Hazardous Materials material below.

OSHA Fire Safety

PREVENTION AND SAFETY

Inspect your client's home for fire hazards regularly.

Check fire alarms to ensure they are in working order.

Know where fire extinguishers are kept.

Keep combustibles and flammables away from heat.

Keep equipment that can spark away from areas where oxygen is in use.

Know the emergency evacuation plan for your patient. All patients should have an emergency plan in their charts.

Make sure client's travel bag is well stocked with essentials.

WHAT TO DO IF A FIRE OCCURS

First: Remember R.A.C.E.

R- Rescue/Remove- Move patient and others away from immediate danger.

A- Alarm: Call 911. You must alert the local fire department. Call RN on call as soon as possible.

C- Confine or contain the fire. Close doors and windows, if able to do so safely.

E- Extinguish the fire if you can safely do it without causing any danger to yourself and others. If the fire is a very small one that you can quickly and safely put out using water or a fire extinguisher, do it. If the fire is too big, get everyone out and call the fire department to put the fire out.

In case of emergency, keep a fully stocked travel bag containing everything necessary for the patient. All personal items should be left behind. No one should go back into the home. Take only what is needed for the patient.

HOW DO FIRES START

Fire is a chemical reaction involving rapid oxidation or burning of a fuel and needs three elements to occur- fuel, oxygen and heat (ignition source).

Fuel- can be any combustible material-solid, liquid or gas. Solids and liquids must be heated to a vapor or gas before they can burn

Oxygen- the air we breathe is about 21% oxygen. Fire only needs an atmosphere of 16% oxygen to burn.
Heat- heat is the energy necessary to increase the temperature of the fuel to a point where sufficient vapors are given off for ignition to occur.

Take any one of the three factors away, and the fire cannot occur or will be extinguished if it is already burning.

Classification of fires

Classified by the types of materials that are burning.

Class A- ordinary combustibles or fibrous materials, such as wood, paper, cloth, rubber and some plastics.

Class B- flammable or combustible liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, paint, paint thinners and propane.

Class C- energized electrical equipment, such as appliances, switches, panel boxes and power tools.

Class D- combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, potassium and sodium. These metals burn at high temperatures and create their own oxygen to support combustion. They may react violently with water or other chemicals.

Fire Extinguisher Ratings

Same as fires, A,B, C,D. Also multiple ratings, AB, BC, ABC. These are capable of putting out more than one class of fire. All ratings are displayed on the extinguisher faceplate.

ABC-rated multipurpose dry powder extinguishers- most common. Almost always red in color, and have a long narrow hose or no hose at all with a short nozzle. Light weight 5-25 lbs.

Water extinguishers- not often used in commercial settings and are usually silver in color, flat bottom and long narrow hose.

CO₂ , Carbon Dioxide extinguishers- usually red in color, have a large tapered nozzle, and heavy 15-85 lbs., should not drop these, if damaged they could explode due to high pressure.

How to Use: P A S S

PULL the pin

AIM the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames

SQUEEZE the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright

SWEEP the extinguisher from side to side , covering the affected area with the extinguisher agent

Leave the area immediately if:

- Your path of escape is threatened
- The extinguisher runs out of agent

- The extinguisher proves to be ineffective
- You can no longer safely fight the fire

Never fight a fire when:

- The fire is spreading beyond the area where it started
- If you can't fight the fire with your back to an escape route
- If the fire can block your only escape route
- If you do not have adequate fire fighting equipment
- If you have not received proper training on fighting fires and using fire-fighting equipment
- If your patient needs constant attention

If any of these situations exists, do not fight the fire alone, call for help.

- Make sure you have the correct type of extinguisher for the type of fire most likely to occur
- Mounted where they are accessible
- Check the plastic pin in the handle, is it intact?
- Make sure the pin, nozzle and faceplate are intact
- Look at the guage, if present, if not, what is the weight of the extinguisher? Does it need to be replaced or recharged? Most have gauges, if so, the guage needle should be in the green.

Waste and Hazardous Materials Management

Employee safety and health is important.

- **Safety:** Starts with prevention
- **Incidents:** MUST be reported to management
- **Hazard Control:** contain chemicals as instructed; avoid exposure to infections; be alert for safety hazards in the environment such as tripping or electrical; good ergonomics; and recognize job related stressors
- **Violence prevention:** Treat everyone with respect
- The agency will identify materials potentially used by all staff that requires special handling to minimize the risk of unsafe use and insure improper disposal. The agency lists hazardous materials in the Material Safety Datasheet manual and references web content provided and maintained by the US Department of Health and Human Resources. The MSDS contains specific information regarding hazardous materials.
- All employees who work with or may be exposed to hazardous materials under normal working conditions or foreseeable emergencies have the need and "right to know" what health and physical hazards exist from chemicals found in the work place.

- The agency establishes and implements processes for handling , transporting, and disposing of hazardous materials and waste including chemicals, infectious or regulated medical waste, and sharps containers.
- The agency will promote proper and safe disposal of, or arrange for the disposal of, all hazardous waste. The agency will be responsible for maintaining a waste management plan, resourcing employees and clients, and assuring that all required records are completed and maintained.