**A prompt sheet for extinguisher users**

Fire extinguisher use is best reserved for those who have receive hand-on training. But it’s one skill which staff are unlikely to practice between training sessions! How can our updated information sheet help?

**Get it right**

Choosing the wrong extinguisher, using it incorrectly and attempting to tackle a fire which is already spreading – are all serious mistakes which could cause injury or loss of life. So it’s important that staff are properly trained. The best course of action is to select appropriate staff e.g. fire marshals, to be sent on a hands-on course. But having trained them, they’ll need to keep the safety rules fresh in their minds. That’s where you’ll need our updated information sheet, How to Use a Fire Extinguisher. Ash your trained extinguisher users to re-read it periodically. For example, you might run through it as part of the debriefing session after a fire drill.

**General rules**

The first part of our document covers general safety rules as before, but in our new version we’ve set them out in a clearer, punchier style. The rules cover, for example:

* Only attempting to tackle a fire in its very early stage
* Putting your own, and everyone else’s, safety first
* Keeping a safe escape route
* Leaving if threatened by fire or smoke

**In practice**

This is followed by some simple practical rules on suing all types of extinguisher. After selecting the right type of extinguisher, checking it’s fully charged and that the pin is not bent, staff are advised to:

* Stand at a safe distance
* Pull out the pin
* Aim at the base of the flames
* Squeeze the handle whilst holding the extinguisher upright
* Sweep from side to side, moving in closer as the fire diminishes

This is followed by a reminder*, “Should your path of escape become threatened; should the extinguisher run out of agent; should the extinguisher prove to be ineffective; should you no longer be able to safely fight the fire, leave the area immediately.”*

**Special Considerations**

1. For water extinguishers there’s a reminder to check first for live electrical equipment
2. Foam extinguishers can be used on a variety of fire types and the advice now covers their use on solid combustibles.
3. Advice on using wet chemical extinguishers have been added as these are now becoming more commonplace in kitchens
4. As before, carbon dioxide and dry powder extinguishers included, along with fire blankets