

FIRE (LIFE) SAFETY

Staff Education and Training

The purpose of this workbook is to provide assistance to your staff in meeting the JCAHO standards for Life Safety, commonly known as the “Fire Safety Standards”. For the purposes of this workbook, we will refer to the JCAHO Life Safety Standards as the Fire Safety Standards, as these standards address staff responsibilities in the healthcare environment related to *fire* management and prevention.

The objectives of this video and workbook are to educate your healthcare organization about:

- Basic fire safety prevention practices
- Basic fire safety management practices
- Regulatory body requirements for individual staff regarding their responsibilities for fire safety
- Which areas or departments hold additional responsibilities for fire safety compliance
- JCAHO and other regulatory body expectations (standard compliance) for fire prevention and management
- How *best* to demonstrate compliance with these expectations (i.e., what the surveyors will expect in terms of compliance within your organization)
- What types of information will be requested and examined during your next JCAHO accreditation survey related to fire safety, prevention and management

While the information contained in the video and this workbook will address basics of fire safety, the educational emphasis is on what staff must *know* and *do* to prevent and safely manage fires within your organization. The video and workbook will also show your staff what the JCAHO requires in terms of demonstrated practice. By following the guidelines in the video and this workbook, your staff will learn optimal fire prevention and management practices, thereby assuring a safe environment from the threat of fire, and the knowledge that your organization is well prepared to manage an actual fire, should this occur.

USE OF A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

- Follow the **P A S S** system: **Pull pin, Aim nozzle, Squeeze handle, Sweep fire:**
- **Pull the pin** at the top of the extinguisher out. This is the pin that keeps the handle from being accidentally pressed when not needed.
- **Aim the nozzle** of the hose toward the base of the fire.
- **Squeeze the handle** to discharge the extinguisher standing approximately **8 feet** away from the fire. If you release the handle, the discharge from the extinguisher will stop.
- **Sweep** the hose and nozzle back and forth at the **base** of the fire. You must watch the fire carefully to assure it is completely extinguished, as fires may re-ignite.
- The above P A S S steps are the most important, and easiest elements to remember when using a fire extinguisher. However an overview of the complete process includes:- Removing the fire extinguisher from the mounting bracket grasping the carrying handle and the base.
- Carry the fire extinguisher to the fire.
- Pull out the locking pin to break the tamper seal.
- If the fire extinguisher has a hose, remove the hose from the retaining clip which attaches the hose to the side of the extinguisher.
- Move the extinguisher approximately **8 feet** from the fire without endangering yourself.
- Hold the hose in one hand and squeeze the handle or trigger release with the other hand.
- If the extinguisher does not have a hose, direct the extinguishing spray by pointing the nose in the proper direction (at the fire).
- Discharge the contents of the extinguisher at the **base** of the flames with a back and forth, **sweeping** motion. Sweep from the edge of the fire that is closest to you to the rear of the fire and then vertically up the surface of the fire.
- Position yourself so that your back is to an escape route (i.e., that you and an escape avenue are behind the fire).

General Fire Prevention and Management Duties of Personnel

- Be completely familiar with the Fire Safety Program and your roles and responsibilities in the program.
- If used, know what your facility's acronym for fire management requires of you, for example if your organization follows the R A C E acronym for fire management, you should know that:
 - R = Rescue
 - A = Alarm or Activate the Alarm
 - C = Contain
 - E = Extinguish or Evacuate as appropriate
- Remember, regardless of the acronym used, the basics for immediate fire management in a given area are to:
 - Rescue individuals directly threatened by the fire.
 - Notify occupants of the building and the proper authorities about the fire by using a fire alarm pull station, calling the fire in to the organization's direct extension for fire reporting, paging a fire overhead – generally known as activating an alarm.
 - Contain and confine fire and smoke to the smallest area possible to the spread of these two elements.
 - Extinguish the fire if possible, only if this can be done without the threat of harm to you or others in the immediate vicinity. If this cannot be done, you must evacuate patients, visitors and staff from the area of the fire and relocate them to an identified refuge (safe) area.
- Learn the locations of, and how to operate, the fire alarm pull stations (boxes) and fire extinguishers throughout the building.
- Be familiar with special requirements for fire prevention and safety specific to your work area and department. For example:
 - Know where medical gas shut off valves (if these exist in your department) are located.
 - Know what type of materials commonly used in your department are flammable and how they should be properly used and stored.