Sterling Fire Protection

Extinguisher classes and monthly check

What the fire classes mean, the monthly inspection list and the service schedule for portable extinguishers under NFC(AE) 2023.

CODE EDITION
NFC(AE) 2023, NFPA 10-2013

REVIEWED
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What the class letters mean

Class	Fire it handles
A	Ordinary combustibles
B	Flammable liquids
C	Energized electrical equipment
K	Cooking oils

The numbers on an extinguisher say how big a fire of that class it is rated for. Kitchens need Class K units near the cooking line.

Monthly check

- [ ] The unit is in its designated place, and nothing blocks or hides it.
- [ ] The gauge reads in the operable range.
- [ ] Fullness is confirmed by weighing or hefting, where that applies.
- [ ] Instructions face out.
- [ ] Safety seals and tamper indicators are intact.
- [ ] No visible damage, corrosion, leakage or clogged nozzle.

Monthly tag entries are handwritten (NFC(AE) 2023, Division C, 2.2.1.2(13)). Put named people on named floors.

Service schedule

Task	Interval	Who
Inspection	Monthly	The owner, a designated employee or a service provider
Maintenance	Every year	Qualified personnel at a certified service agency
Six-year maintenance	Every 6 years, on stored-pressure dry chemical units	Certified agency
Hydrostatic test	Every 12 years for dry chemical. Every 5 years for CO2, water and wet chemical	Agency with certified test equipment
Recharge	Immediately after any use	Certified agency

Halocarbon clean agent units follow their own schedule, so ask your agency and read the nameplate.

Where extinguishers go

- Mount them where people will pass on the way out, not in the back of a mechanical room.
- A unit under 40 lb (18 kg) gross goes with its top no higher than 5 ft (1.5 m) above the floor. A heavier one goes no higher than 3.5 ft (1.1 m).
- Confirm travel distances against NFPA 10-2013 and your AHJ.

Sources

1. National Fire Code 2023 Alberta Edition, National Research Council Canada
   https://nrc-publications.canada.ca/eng/view/object/?id=6c3e5cf6-8891-40e0-8b37-a78665c23f27
2. Owner's Service Manual, hand portable dry chemical extinguishers, Amerex
   https://www.amerex-fire.com/upl/downloads/manuals/english/hand-portable-dry-chemical-extinguishers-e1d90351.pdf

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