



Guidelines on Maintenance of Equipment and Qualifications of Instructors for Training Programmes on Portable Fire Extinguishers

Introduction

To enhance the public's fire safety knowledge, some training institutes organise basic training programmes on fire prevention from time to time, the contents of which include the use and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers. This leaflet, which serves as a reference for such training providers, provides guidelines on the maintenance of equipment as well as on the qualifications of instructors for training programmes on portable fire extinguishers. The guidelines aim at protecting the safety of instructors and trainees, and ensuring the quality of training.

Maintenance of Equipment

In general, it is safe to use a well-maintained portable fire extinguisher. An ill-maintained or damaged one, however, may cause pressure leak or violent rupture, leading to ejection of parts and hence injury or death of the user. As such, for the safety of both instructors and trainees, never use fire extinguishers without proper maintenance for instruction or training purpose.

It is the responsibility of operators of training institutes to ensure that the portable fire extinguishers used for training or demonstration purpose are kept in good working condition at all times, and that they are inspected by a registered fire service installation contractor (RFSIC) at least once in every 12 months. Also, hydraulic pressure test should be carried out every five years on the cylinder in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. In addition, the RFSIC concerned should, within 14 days after completion of the work, issue to the person who has requested the work to be undertaken a certificate and forward a copy thereof to the Director of Fire Services.

Legal reference:

Regulation 8 of the Fire Service (Installations and Equipment) Regulations, Cap. 95B, Laws of Hong Kong, stipulates that the owner of any fire service installation or equipment which is installed in any premises shall keep such fire service installation or equipment in efficient working order at all times; and have such fire service installation or equipment inspected by an RFSIC at least once in every 12 months. Anyone who breaches this regulation commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine at level 5.

Before a training session, the instructor should inspect the surface of all portable fire extinguishers used for instruction purpose, paying special attention to concealed parts of the cylinders. Never use a fire extinguisher without any valid maintenance label, or if corrosion, damage or rust is noticed thereon. In case of doubt about the condition of the cylinders, stop using the fire extinguishers immediately and hand them to a qualified Class 3 RFSIC for inspection.

All portable fire extinguishers for training purpose should be handed to a qualified Class 3 RFSIC for inspection and refill after use.

Please refer to Fire Protection Notice No. 11 - *Notes on Fire Extinguishers (Suitability and Maintenance)* which can be downloaded via the following internet hyperlink:

http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk/home/eng/source/notices/Fire_Protection_Notice_No_11.pdf

Qualifications of Instructors

Instructors of training programmes on portable fire extinguishers should possess proper qualifications, details of which are listed below:

- (1) Instructors of training programmes on the use of portable fire extinguishers should possess at least one of the following qualifications:
 - being an FSD Fire Safety Ambassador;
 - being a Class 3 RFSIC; or
 - work experience in fire engineering/fire services field.
- (2) Instructors of training programmes on the maintenance of portable fire extinguishers should be Class 3 RFSICs.

Legal reference:

Regulation 7 of the Fire Service (Installations and Equipment) Regulations, Cap. 95B, Laws of Hong Kong, stipulates that no person other than an RFSIC shall maintain, inspect or repair any fire service installation or equipment which is installed in any premises.

Visual aids instead of physical demonstration should be used in class to complement instruction for training sessions not conducted by an instructor with the above qualifications.

Enquiries

For further information on the use of portable fire extinguishers for training purpose, please contact:

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