

Portable Extinguishers

Background

Under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), the 'responsible person' has a number of duties. These include ensuring that all extinguishers are fit for purpose and maintained correctly and that those installed meet actual requirements. The responsible person must ensure that a competent person is employed to undertake these tasks.

The relevant British Standard for the commissioning and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers is BS5306-3:2009.

What do the changes mean for you?

Below are some general points that will be of interest to persons responsible for the maintenance of portable extinguishers in premises under their control.

- The relevant British Standard recommends basic servicing be carried out annually with a tolerance of one month either side of the last basic service. This is due to the fact that it was almost impossible to visit premises exactly twelve months from the previous appointment.
- The extended service for water, water based or powder should be carried out five years from the date it was commissioned or six years from date of manufacture; whichever is sooner. For primary sealed powder types it is ten years from commissioning or eleven from date of manufacture (CO2 extinguishers are the same, being at ten years).
- Plastic head caps should be replaced at the end of an extended service and before reassembly of the extinguisher.
- None of the markings on the extinguisher should be blocked by provider labels/maintenance labels.
- The maintenance label should have full postal address of the service provider and a statement that it has been serviced to BS5306-3.
- The maintenance report MUST include details for the provision of permanent replacements for condemned or missing extinguishers. It should also provide advice if coverage within the building needs improving.
- Any extinguishers manufactured prior to 2002 and which have no CE marking should be condemned. Refurbished extinguishers are exempt.

A certificate of inspection should include the following:

- Name, full postal address and telephone number of service provider.
- Date of inspection.
- Service technician's ID.
- List of extinguishers serviced.
- Signature of responsible person.
- Statement advising service has been carried out in accordance with BS5306-3.