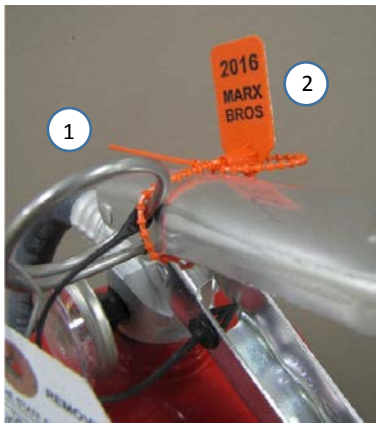
CAL STATE LA
RISK MANAGEMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY

Is Your Fire Extinguisher Ready for Use?

A visual inspection with steps below will ensure that you have your dry chemical fire extinguisher (FE), ready for use. If any of the following four conditions has occurred, servicing or recertification is required.

1. Pin is not in-place. If the pin is not inserted in to the handle, the FE may have been discharged either intentionally or by accident.
2. Plastic tamper seal is broken. Seals break by manipulation (hit during storage), use or some other intentional action.
3. Pressure gage is not in the green. A gage indicating low pressure can mean that there has been previous use or that there was a slow leak.
4. The FE needs to be certified on an annual basis. Note the FE's inspection date has been punched into the tag. The recertification should come within a year following the punched date. If re-certification is more than one year passed the punched date, the FE's condition cannot be assured.







Ready for use is only part of requirements. These next three attributes need to be corrected when found even though the extinguisher is quite serviceable.

- Extinguishers need to be mounted in an accessible location, about 40 inches above floor level. Mounting is either on a hook or in a fire extinguisher cabinet. There are ADA requirements which apply to new installations.
- The extinguisher's location must be clearly evident. A sign or label should indicate the location if not visible from an exit pathway location.
- The fire extinguisher should have nothing blocking access for use in an emergency.

Our office provides a monthly inspection of FEs using a bar code scanner. The above attributes are the inspection requirements that we use. Our inspection results are kept on file in the RM/EHS Office. Refer any questions to Richard Brennan at 3-3549.