5. **Fire fighting**

**Introduction**

Fires can cause serious injury and death. A fire will result in expensive building repairs and may even mean the closure of your factory. Fire safety is a crucial issue to safeguard the welfare of our workers as well as your business.

**Common causes of fire**

You need to ensure that all potentially hazardous items are correctly stored:

- **Common combustibles**, such as wood, paper, cloth, rubber, trash, plastics materials
- **Highly flammable liquids**, such as gasoline, kerosene, oils, liquid propane, greases, solvents, and other gases
- **Electrical equipment**, such as computers or computer rooms, electrical distribution locations, appliances, manufacturing equipment, electrical substations, and laundries

**Common issues**

The following are common issues in this area:

**Inadequate or blocked fire exits**

- Many factories don’t provide enough exits for workers to escape if there is a fire, you need to make sure all workers have at least 2 escape routes
- Some exits are locked or blocked
- Factories don’t always consider the route of escape, for example, a fire escape should not lead workers passed hazardous areas such as the chemical store

**Poorly maintained fire fighting equipment**

- Fire extinguishers and hoses need to be in a good condition if they are going to help save lives
- Extinguishers need to be the right type for the area (see guidance overleaf)
- All extinguishers should be accessible at all times

**Insufficient training**

- Sometimes workers don’t know how to use the equipment available
- Many factories do not hold regular drills, which will slow evacuation down and may lead to loss of life

**Fire escape routes**

- Poor marking of escape routes can lead to confusion in an evacuation
- If the routes are not clearly marked they may inadvertently be used as excess storage and end up blocked
Fire prevention

What Kingfisher expects
- All facilities must have an emergency evacuation plan, a fire safety plan, a fire prevention strategy, and should have a fire safety policy.
- Factory may visit or ask local fire department for assistance in developing a fire prevention plan for fire emergencies.
- Training must be done annually and new employees should be trained prior to beginning their job responsibilities. Training must be documented and the documentation kept on file.

Fire extinguishers

Types of fire extinguishers

Class ‘A’
Ordinary combustibles: If fires are of ordinary type combustibles, such as paper, wood, cloth, upholstery, plastics (anything that will leave an ash). These type of fires can be extinguished with either a water type extinguisher or dry chemical type extinguisher.

Class ‘B’
Flammable liquids: if fires are fuelled by combustible and flammable type liquids and gasses, such as cooking oils, grease, paint, motor oil, kerosene and gasoline (gas, oil, grease, tar and oil-based paint). These type fires can be extinguished with either a dry chemical extinguisher or a carbon dioxide extinguisher. Never use water.

Class ‘C’
Energised electrical equipment: if fires involve live electrical equipment or wires.

These type fires can be extinguished by using a dry chemical extinguisher or a carbon dioxide extinguisher (wiring, fuse boxes and circuits). By turning off the electric, the fire becomes a class ‘A’ or ‘B’ fire.

Class ‘D’
Combustible metals: if fires involve combustible metals such as titanium, magnesium and zirconium. These fires need a special agent to extinguish them. The dry powder extinguisher is the agent that should be used to extinguish these fires.

Fire extinguisher mounting
Factory managers are responsible for ensuring that fire extinguishers are visible, clearly labelled, easily accessible and well maintained.

Maintaining equipment
- It is recommended that fire extinguishers are inspected on a monthly basis and required that they are checked at least once every year to ensure they are properly charged and ready for use. Most fire extinguishers come with a tag that can simply be punched every month upon inspection.
- A written procedure should be developed for replacing a discharged or used fire extinguisher. This procedure should be communicated to all employees.

Fire drills and training
- Kingfisher recommend fire drills should be held on site at least annually.
- At least 2 people per shift in each department should be trained on the use of fire extinguishers this training should be documented.