

# How To Fight a Fire

Week Number 26 (June 25 - July 1) 2017 Edition

## **OBJECTIVES**

*Upon completion of this safety talk, participants will be able to:*

- *Know how the acronym RACE applies to jobsite fires*
- *Know how the acronym PASS applies to fighting a jobsite fire*

When responding to a fire emergency it is helpful to keep two words in mind: Race and Pass. These are both acronyms to help make it easier in an emergency to remember what to do. Race deals with the order things should be done when a fire is discovered, and Pass explains how to fight a fire.

- **Rescue-** The evacuation and rescue of anyone caught in the area of the fire is the first thing that must be done. The decision to perform rescue first should be made carefully. It should not be done at the risk of your own life nor delay the next step Alarm. If there is potential for loss of your life, you will only add to the victims and delay more effective responders from getting to the scene.
- **Alarm-** Activate the fire alarm to alert professional firefighters that help is needed. When at all possible a call to 911 or the local fire department should also be made. This will ensure that the fire department has been notified in case of an alarm failure.
- **Contain-** The fire should be contained to help prevent it spreading. This includes shutting doors and windows and shutting off any exhaust system that may be on at the time. If it is possible and safe, any combustible materials (wood, paper, cloth or fuel) should be moved as far away from the fire as possible.
- **Extinguish-** Put the fire out. This should be done with a fire extinguisher that is the correct size and rating for the fire to be put out. If it is not possible to put out the fire safely, it should be left for the local fire department.

This leads us to the next acronym, Pass that helps to explain the correct way to use a fire extinguisher to put out a fire.

- **Pull the Pin-** In order for a fire extinguisher to work, it must first be activated. Near the handle of an extinguisher is the discharge locking pin that must be removed to activate the extinguisher. Until the pin is pulled the extinguisher won't discharge the extinguishing medium.
- **Aim low at the base of the flames-** Aiming the extinguisher low at the fire will allow the extinguishing medium to be applied to the source of the fire. This will help to put the flames out quicker and more efficiently.
- **Squeeze the handle-** Once the pin is removed, the extinguisher is ready to use and squeezing the handle will release the contents to put out the fire.
- **Sweep side to side-** While squeezing the handle of the extinguisher, it must be moved from one side of the fire to the other at the base. If the extinguisher is shot directly at the center of the fire, you have the very real possibility of putting out the fire in the center and creating a fire at both sides. The sweeping motion helps to distribute the extinguishing medium evenly across the fire, putting it out at its base.

It must be remembered that no employee should attempt to put out any fire if it puts the employee at risk of injury. The success of employee firefighting attempts is linked to the amount of training and drills that have occurred before the fire.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What does RACE stand for?
- Why is it best to pull the fire alarm and to call the fire department?
- Why should a sweeping motion be used when discharging a fire extinguisher?