

Code Requirements: Use Strap-Type Brackets On Extinguisher Installations

by Mark Conroy

We all know that extinguishers need to be readily available, in a sufficient number, and have adequate capacities for potential fires in buildings. We install them with uniform distribution, along normal paths of travel, and at the entrance and exit doors. But we often forget that they need to be at the right height and installed in strap-type brackets if there is a chance that they can become dislodged.

Extinguisher Height Rules (NFPA 10)

1. The bottom of the extinguisher must be at least 4 inches off the floor
2. Extinguishers up to 40 pounds (18 kg) must be installed so the top is no more than 5 feet off the floor
3. Extinguishers over 40 pounds (18 kg) must be installed so the top is no more than 3½ feet off the floor

One commonly overlooked problem is extinguishers, in locations that are subject to dislodgement, that aren't installed in strap-type brackets. As an industry, we should correct these problems and retrofit the installations to meet code. Installing extinguishers in strap-type brackets complies with NFPA 10:

6.1.3.6 Fire extinguishers installed in vehicles or under other conditions where they are subject to dislodgement shall be installed in approved strap-type brackets specifically designed for this application.

An extinguisher mounted on a hanger is usually in a place where a strap-type bracket will fit. Almost every building has a number of extinguishers that should be in these brackets for code compliance. All extinguisher manufacturers have strap-type brackets available. Carry a few along on your next service call and you'll be surprised at the positive response.

Most Common Extinguisher Strap-Type Brackets*

EXTINGUISHER SIZE	AMEREX	ANSUL	BADGER STANDARD	BADGER ADVANTAGE	BUCKEYE	KIDDE PRO LINE	KIDDE PRO PLUS
2½ lb	817A	24610AS	MB250	466401K	700287W	466401K	MB250
5 lb	818A	429146AS	MB5	466400K	700270W	466400K	MB5
10 lb	846A	435793AS	366242K	366242K	700430W	366242K	366242K

* To know which bracket to use, refer to the extinguisher nameplate label.

Extinguishers must be in their designated locations and never sitting on the floor. As an experienced technician, you know which extinguishers should be in strap-type brackets. Provide the fixes by installing retrofit brackets and make the installations code compliant. You'll not only be providing code-compliant installations, but you'll be improving your bottom line.

Mark Conroy is an engineer in our Boston office and a member of the NFPA Technical Committee on Portable Fire Extinguishers. Copyright © 2014, all rights reserved.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in the above Tech Series article are the author's only and provide limited information. Although the information is believed to be reliable, Brooks Equipment expressly disclaims any warranty with respect to the information and any liability for errors or omissions. The user of this article or the product(s) is responsible for verifying the information's accuracy from all available sources, including the product manufacturer. The authority having jurisdiction should be contacted for code interpretations.