

Extinguishers: New NFPA Requires High-Flow Extinguisher for Fuel Dispensing Areas and Repair Garages

There were major updates to the 2021 edition of NFPA 30A, *Code for Motor Fuel Dispensing Facilities and Repair Garages*. A review of chapter 9 (Operational Requirements) reveals that HIGH-FLOW ABC Dry Chemical Extinguishers are now required for fuel dispensing areas and repair garages. Here is what you need to know to make sure your customers' facilities are in compliance with the most recent NFPA 30A code.

For the 2018 and earlier editions, NFPA 30A referenced NFPA 10 for extinguishers, and extinguishers for motor fuel dispensing areas (located outdoors) be provided according to the extra (high) hazard requirements for Class B hazards. This meant that NFPA 10, Table 6.3.1.1 and the extinguisher rating system was employed (essentially 40B or 80B rated extinguishers). For 2018, there were no high-flow extinguisher requirements in NFPA 30A.

The good news for the 2021 edition of NFPA 30A is that high-flow ABC dry chemical extinguishers are now required and facility owners will now have a reasonable level of safety for protecting their operations, employees, and customers during the early stages of a fire. Here is a summary of the new updates.

- **All Portable Fire Extinguishers.** Extinguishers installed to achieve compliance with NFPA 30A are required to have a capacity of at least 10 lb ABC dry chemical and a minimum discharge rate of 1 lb/sec [9.2.5.2.2].
- **Outdoor Liquid Motor Fuel Dispensing Areas.** At least one extinguisher installed at each fuel dispensing island or group of islands with a maximum travel distance of 75 ft to an extinguisher [9.2.5.2.7].
- **Indoor Liquid Motor Fuel Dispensing Areas.** At least one extinguisher installed between 15 and 50 ft from the fuel dispenser and within the path of egress [9.2.5.2.6.1]. Additional extinguishers are required where the travel distance and egress requirements cannot be simultaneously met [9.2.5.2.6.2].
- **Gaseous Fuel Dispensing Areas.** At least one extinguisher installed between 15 and 50 ft from each gaseous fuel dispenser or group of dispensers [9.2.5.2.8].
- **Repair Garages.** At least one extinguisher installed in every repair garage [9.2.5.2.5.1] with a maximum travel distance from any point in the service area to an extinguisher not to exceed 50 ft [9.2.5.2.5.2].
- **Allowance for Installing Larger Extinguishers.** The maximum travel distance from a hazard area to 20 lb ABC a high-flow dry chemical extinguisher is allowed to be 100 ft [9.2.5.2.3].

There is more good news on the horizon. A review of the proposed changes for the 2024 edition reveals that high-flow ABC dry chemical extinguishers will be required for marine fueling facilities. The minimum size will be 20lb extinguishers with a minimum discharge rate of 1 lb/sec and a maximum travel distance of 100 ft from the hazard area to an extinguisher. The proposed requirements are not retroactive and will be applicable to extinguishers when they are installed, replaced, or exchanged.

Your customers deserve the highest level of safety. Let them know that NFPA now embraces high-flow ABC dry chemical extinguishers for these hazards. Even though the newer requirements for High-flow extinguishers might not be adopted, your customers may decide that it is time to upgrade and provide the most appropriate extinguishers that helps ensure highest level of safety is available for protecting their operations, employees, and customers.

© 2022 Brooks Equipment.

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 Company, LLC 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.