

Tips for Maintaining your Fire Extinguisher

The State Fire Marshall's Office advises the following:

- Check fire extinguisher every month to ensure unit remains charged.
- Once a year, check unit to ensure chemical is loose and not hardened.
- When unit is 5 to 6 years old, it needs to be discharged and refilled.
- When unit is 12 years old, it needs to be hydrostatically tested.

Annual check and tag of your fire extinguisher is part of your license renewal. If your fire extinguisher is five to six years old, you will need to have it discharged and refilled. The date the unit was manufactured should be on a metal plate located in the right-hand bottom corner of the unit. It is possible the unit may not function properly, even though the gauge reads charged. This would primarily be the case where the unit is five to six years old and has not been checked and tested.

Two businesses in Mankato provide this service:

Mankato/Fairmont Fire & Safety Co.

PO Box 51

Mankato, MN 56003

(507) 625-2678

Viking Fire and Safety

34 Map Drive

Mankato, MN 56001

(507) 345-6590

Contact the business to determine their charge for an annual "Check and Tag." In some situations, they will come to your home to complete the check or to pick up the unit and then return it to you.

In all cases of a fire, your first move will be to evacuate the children as you have practiced during your monthly fire drills. Thus, you would not use your fire extinguisher. However, there could be a situation in which you would need to discharge the unit in order to reach a child and you must ensure it is in working order.