

Fire Extinguishers – Hospitality Stats and Facts

FACTS

Fire extinguishers are essential for ensuring safety in hotels, but they also come with potential hazards if not used or maintained correctly. Here are some of the hazards associated with fire extinguishers in the hotel industry:

- **Improper Use:** Without proper training, hotel staff may use fire extinguishers incorrectly, which can be ineffective in extinguishing a fire and can even exacerbate the situation.
- **Maintenance Issues:** Fire extinguishers that are not regularly inspected or maintained may not function properly in an emergency. A malfunctioning extinguisher can delay the fire-fighting process, increasing the risk of damage and injury.
- **Chemical Exposure:** Some types of fire extinguishers release chemicals that can be harmful if inhaled or if they come into contact with skin. This is particularly concerning in confined spaces without proper ventilation.
- **Physical Injuries:** Fire extinguishers are heavy, and improper handling can lead to physical injuries, including strains, sprains, or even injuries from dropping an extinguisher on feet or toes.
- **Pressure-Related Injuries:** If a fire extinguisher is damaged or malfunctioning, it could release pressure suddenly, causing injuries or turning the extinguisher into a projectile.
- **Visibility and Respiratory Issues:** Using a fire extinguisher can significantly reduce visibility in a room, which can disorient individuals trying to escape a fire. The chemicals can also cause respiratory distress, particularly in people with underlying respiratory conditions.

STATS

- According to the U.S. Fire Administration, an estimated 3,900 hotel and motel fires occur annually, resulting in about 15 fatalities and 100 injuries each year. Cooking is identified as the leading cause of hotel and motel fires, accounting for 55% of the incidents. Additionally, the NFPA highlights that hotel and motel fires cause an estimated \$100 million in property losses annually.
- In 2022, there were 1,504,500 fires reported, resulting in 3,790 civilian deaths and 13,250 injuries, which underscores the broader impact of fires on safety (Injury Facts) [1].
- In the United States, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) statistics show there is an average of 12 deaths and 143 injuries every year from hotel fires.
- Fire departments in Canada attended just over 39,000 fires in 2021, marking the second consecutive year of increases. Both fires and the number of fatalities increased during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the number of deaths rising from 148 in 2019 to 202 in 2021. Prior to the pandemic, total fire incidents had generally been declining. Outdoor fires (excluding wildfires) increased by just over 2,700 incidents in 2021, becoming the most commonly reported type of fire for the first time ever. Outdoor fires accounted for 45% of all reported incidents