

Fire & Life Safety

Provincial Public Education Position Paper

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Issue: Should adults be taught to extinguish fires?

Position:

Adults should be taught **when** and **how** to extinguish small fires.

Rationale:

Adults should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety. Training and practise in extinguishing small fires is appropriate. With education, adults can evaluate a situation and take the wisest course of action.

Being able to extinguish a small contained fire, such as a cooking pan, wastebasket fire or campfire may prevent needless injury and minimize property damage. This is especially true where fire service response time may be extended or in areas where fire protection is non-existent.

Although it is better to fight a fire through prevention and early detection, basic fire safety practices should be taught to adults. This should include the proper use of extinguishers, extinguishing methods and extinguishing agents.

Adults who have been trained to extinguish small fires should instruct all other individuals to exit the building or area and ensure that the fire service is called.

Adults attempting to extinguish fires should be taught to ensure they have a means of escape in case they are unable to put the fire out.

Purpose of Public Education Position Papers:

In order to provide for the consistent delivery of fire and life safety education in the Province of British Columbia, the BC Public Fire & Life Safety Education Advisory Committee through the Public Education Strategic Plan has identified the need for the development of Public Education Position Papers. While it is not mandatory for individual agencies who deliver fire and life safety educational programs to follow these position papers, it is hoped that these positions will be supported throughout British Columbia, in order to achieve consistency in the delivery of fire and life safety education.

Fire & Life Safety Public Education Position Papers are published by the Office of the Fire Commissioner in conjunction with the BC Public Fire & Life Safety Education Advisory Committee.

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