



ASCIP *RISK ALERT!*

Date: April 4, 2003

Attention: ASCIP Members

Subject: NEW Fire Extinguisher Service Requirements

For several years, ASCIP staff and its consultants participated in the rulemaking process to revise the hand-held dry chemical fire extinguisher service requirements in California.

Traditionally, each portable dry chemical fire extinguisher in California was required to be disassembled, rebuilt, and recharged each year, a process that was expensive, created opportunity for error, and at times violated the extinguisher manufacturer's new product warranty. In past years, a number of changes to the fire extinguisher service regulations had been proposed. Under the new California State Fire Marshal (SFM), this issue rapidly moved forward and on January 1, 2003, the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 19, State Fire Marshal, regulations concerning fire extinguishers were changed.

Generally, these changes replace the annual service requirement for portable dry chemical fire extinguishers with a new six (6) year service interval which should represent a considerable cost savings to all schools in the future. One final annual service during 2003 is required of all fire extinguishers subject to these new rules to remove the previously required internal maintenance tags after which the six year service interval may begin. If an extinguisher is used, damaged, or reaches the date for required hydrostatic testing, the necessary service must be performed at that time and the six year service interval for that extinguisher will then begin on that date. **Annual maintenance (a detailed external visual examination and any repairs indicated by that examination) of each fire extinguisher is required to be performed in accordance with guidelines provided in the latest edition of the *SFM Fire Extinguisher Study Guide* which is available from the SFM website or from ASCIP in hard copy or via Email.**

While annual maintenance must generally be performed by a licensed fire extinguisher service company, schools, colleges, and other public agencies may apply to the SFM for a State license to perform such maintenance procedures themselves. The monthly inspection requirement for each fire extinguisher has not changed and must be recorded on the individual fire extinguisher hang tag or on a site inspection log maintained on file.

Reviewed July, 2006