

BS 5306-8:2023



BSI Standards Publication

Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises

Part 8: Selection and positioning of portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice

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Published by BSI Standards Limited 2023

ISBN 978 0 539 02678 8

ICS 13.220.10

The following BSI references relate to the work on this document:

Committee reference FSH/2

Draft for comment 20/30384737 DC; 22/30465306 DC

Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date

Text affected

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages I to IV, pages 1 to 23, an inside back cover and a back cover.

Foreword

Publishing information

This part of [BS 5306](#) is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 30 November 2023. It was prepared by Technical Committee FSH/2, *Fire extinguishers*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to the committee manager.

Supersession

This part of [BS 5306](#) supersedes [BS 5306-8:2012](#), which is withdrawn.

Relationship with other publications

[BS 5306](#) is published in the following parts:

- Part 0: *Guide for selection, use and application of fixed firefighting systems and other types of fire equipment*;
- Part 1: *Hose reels and foam inlets*;
- Part 2 (withdrawn): *Specification for sprinkler systems*¹⁾;
- Part 3: *Commissioning and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*;
- Part 4: *Specification for carbon dioxide systems*;
- Part 8: *Selection and positioning of portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*;
- Part 9: *Recharging of portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*;
- Part 10: *Colour coding to indicate the extinguishing medium contained in portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*.

This part of [BS 5306](#) is intended to be read in conjunction with [BS EN 2](#) and [BS EN 3](#) (see also *Information about this document*).

Information about this document

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- recognition of current legislation;
- removal of the subclause on training, noting that this is not part of the selection and installation process, and that it is covered by legal obligations;
- removal of the subclause on commissioning and maintenance, noting that it is covered by the new post-installation arrangements subclause of this standard;
- inclusion of new recommendations on environmental impact;
- revision of information on the use of powder;
- clarification on the recommendations for class A hazards;
- changes in the recommendations for class C hazards;
- revision of travel distances;
- revision of calculation examples; and
- inclusion of information on batteries.

¹⁾ [BS 5306-2](#) is withdrawn, but is still in use for existing systems.

The fire rating system of [BS EN 3](#), in which the fire performance of extinguishers on class A, class B and class F fires, as defined in [BS EN 2](#), is assessed on the basis of their ability to extinguish specified test fires, is used in this part of [BS 5306](#) for the determination of the distribution of extinguishers on premises.

This part of [BS 5306](#) does not define the use of any particular body/body-cover colour.

It is expected that the fire ratings marked on the fire extinguisher will have been verified as being achieved in accordance with [BS EN 3-7](#).

This publication can be withdrawn, revised, partially superseded or superseded. Information regarding the status of this publication can be found in the Standards Catalogue on the BSI website at bsigroup.com/standards, or by contacting the Customer Services team.

Where websites and webpages have been cited, they are provided for ease of reference and are correct at the time of publication. The location of a webpage or website, or its contents, cannot be guaranteed.

Hazard warnings

WARNING. This British Standard calls for the use of substances and/or procedures that can be injurious to health if adequate precautions are not taken. It refers only to technical suitability and does not absolve the user from legal obligations relating to health and safety at any stage.

WARNING. Products of decomposition in a fire situation are likely to be hazardous to persons in enclosed spaces with restricted ventilation.

Use of this document

As a code of practice, this part of [BS 5306](#) takes the form of recommendations and guidance. It is not to be quoted as if it were a specification. Users are expected to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Users may substitute any of the recommendations in this part of [BS 5306](#) with practices of equivalent or better outcome. Any user claiming compliance with this part of [BS 5306](#) is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

Presentational conventions

The provisions in this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type and does not constitute a normative element.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

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This publication is not intended to constitute a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Particular attention is drawn to the following statutory regulations:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [1] and associated Guidance Notes;
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 [2] and associated Guidance Notes;
- Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001 [3] and associated Guidance Notes;
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 [4]; and
- Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 [5].

Introduction

It is important for the fire protection of a building to be considered as a whole. Portable fire extinguishers form an important part of such facilities, although it cannot be assumed that their provision entirely obviates the need for other protection, e.g. internal rising mains, hose reels, sprinklers, other automatic or manual extinguishing systems, mobile extinguishing units and fire alarm systems.

Well-maintained and professionally installed fire extinguishers are fundamentally safe and easy to use. Research has shown that extinguishers are successful in a significant number of fires each year and make a major contribution to first aid fire safety.

Portable fire extinguishers are essentially first aid firefighting appliances. They are valuable in the early stages of fire when their portability and immediate availability for use by one person enable a prompt attack to be made.

The recommendations of this part of [BS 5306](#) are intended to assist the person(s) responsible for the safety of the building in planning to control the consequences of possible fires.

Attention is drawn to the legal obligation to ensure that subsequent preventative and protective measures are carried out by a competent person. The carrying out of a fire risk assessment is part of the duty of care legally required of the responsible person having control of a workplace.

Advice on such matters can be obtained from fire engineering companies, fire authorities, the Health and Safety Executive, fire insurers and fire safety consultants.

1 Scope

This part of [BS 5306](#) gives recommendations and guidance on the selection and positioning of portable fire extinguishers, primarily those conforming to the BS EN 3 series, that can be carried by one person and that are used for the protection of buildings, other premises and building contents, and to assist evacuation.

This part of [BS 5306](#) is not applicable to motor vehicles, aircraft, caravans or marine craft.

NOTE Portable fire extinguishers for use in aircraft are specified in [BS 7867](#), their provision in caravans is dealt with in [BS 3632](#) and [BS EN 1645-1](#), whilst those for marine craft and motor vehicles are the subject of a number of international agreements, government regulations and advisory publications.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes provisions, or limits the application, of this document²⁾. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[BS 5306-3](#), *Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises – Part 3: Commissioning and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*

[BS 5306-10](#), *Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises – Part 10: Colour coding to indicate the extinguishing medium contained in portable fire extinguishers – Code of practice*

[BS EN 2](#), *Classification of fires*³⁾

BS EN 3 (all parts), *Portable fire extinguishers*³⁾

²⁾ Documents that are referred to solely in an informative manner are listed in the Bibliography.

³⁾ This standard also gives a normative reference to BS EN 3-7, and informative references to BS EN 2:1992 and BS EN 3-7:2004+A1:2007.