



Fire Extinguisher Extinguished Despair

By Dr. Vanessa M. Dazio

One day, while working in my second floor home office, a really loud, piercing sound broke my concentration. It was the smoke detector! Just about the same time, I smelled smoke, but did not see it. A repair man had unknowingly tipped over a plastic trash can that was a few feet away from a working hobby kiln in our downstairs garage. Eventually, the trash can melted, and paper contents caught on fire. By the time I figured out where the fire was, six foot flames were hugging exposed wooden 2 X 4's directly above the kiln. Smoke was beginning to accumulate in the garage. I knew I could escape through one of the three garage doors or one side of the garage or the patio doors on the other side. Fast action was needed. First, 911. Then, I grabbed the fire extinguisher in the garage and remembered the word PASS from a previous fire safety course. Now, I PASS that tip along to you.

PASS

PULL (Pin on the fire extinguisher.)

AIM (Aim low, start at the base of the fire.)

SQUEEZE (Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.)

SWEEP (Swish the fire extinguisher hose from side to side at the base of the fire, until the fire is out.)

The fire department arrived within a few minutes of my call. They removed the smoldering remnants of the melted waste and noted our fire could have been disastrous.

Based on personal experience, I know fire training and fire extinguishers save property. The firefighters said the fire extinguisher and quick thinking saved the house and everything in it (including my three little Yorkies and old Cocker Spaniel). Disaster and despair were prevented. On that day, our home life was saved!

