PROCEDURES FOR FIGHTING FIRES IN CENTRAL OFFICE BUILDINGS

1. GENERAL

1.01 This section describes in general the procedures for fighting fires in central office buildings.

1.02 This section is reissued to expand the information on the operation and application of carbon dioxide- and water-type extinguishers and first aid fire hose stations, to revise Fig. 3, and to make other changes to bring the section generally up to date. The title has also been revised.

1.03 Each fire will present an individual problem; therefore, it is impossible to prescribe definite rules to be followed in fighting fires. There are, however, certain general rules and procedures that should be followed.

1.04 The majority of fires are easily extinguished if the proper measures are taken before the flames have gained headway. It is important, therefore, that the three basic lines of defense against fires: (1) fire extinguishers, (2) standpipe and hose, and (3) Fire Department are applied promptly and in this order as required. While it is essential that proper action be taken, it is even more important that it be done quickly.

1.05 If no alarm has sounded when a fire is discovered, sound an alarm to summon the aid of the available telephone personnel. Every effort should be made to avoid panic, especially in operating rooms.

1.06 Wherever possible, the power and light circuits in portions of the building exposed to fire, water, or extinguisher liquids should be disconnected or turned off.

Caution: Care should be exercised not to turn off circuits used to provide general illumination or power to equipment used in the evacuation of the building or for fire fighting purposes unless absolutely necessary.

1.07 Every effort should be made to eliminate drafts in the room where the fire exists by closing windows and doors and turning off or disconnecting blowers, ventilating systems, and fans. If the smoke and fumes are too severe, the windows may be opened at the top.

1.08 The Fire Department should be summoned in cases where any doubt exists that the fire cannot be extinguished without outside assistance. While awaiting the arrival of the Fire Department, such fire suppression measures as appear feasible and safe should be applied. The firemen should be met and directed to the fire upon arrival and cautioned as to the importance of confining the water or extinguisher liquids to the fire area insomuch as it is practical to do so. Further assistance as may be advisable should be given them.

1.09 Protect the surrounding telephone equipment and records from damage by water or extinguisher liquids with tarpaulins, as much as possible.

1.10 ***At no time should an employee risk his life in the protection of Telephone Company property.***

2. USE OF FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

Carbon Dioxide Extinguisher

2.01 The carbon dioxide extinguisher is used for fighting small equipment fires, such as fires just starting in wires, cables, switchboards, power boards, power plant apparatus, or elevator machinery and for fighting fires in certain locations involving flammable liquids. These extinguishers should be used wherever it is possible to get the nozzle within 1 or 2 feet of the flames. In the case of power boards, power plant apparatus, billing and computing machines used in accounting centers, CAMA or AMA equipment, radio and carrier equipment, or elevator machinery, if the fire is beyond the effective scope of carbon dioxide extinguishers, call the Fire Department.

2.02 In the case of burning fat, such as in a cafeteria deep fat fryer, turn the power off for the electric heating elements or shut off the cooking gas.

Caution: Care should be exercised that the force of the extinguisher gas as it is discharged does not spatter the hot fat.

2.03 To operate the carbon dioxide extinguisher at floor level, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove the extinguisher from the mounting bracket and carry it to the fire, placing it in an upright position.

→ (2) Remove the guard pin, when provided.

(3) Remove nozzle from the clip and direct at fire. For extinguishers having handwheel-type valves, open the valve by turning the handwheel to the left. For extinguishers having trigger or squeeze grip control, open the valve by upward pressure of the index finger on the trigger or squeeze grip. The trigger valve may be latched in the open position, if desired, by pulling the trigger up and forward (toward the valve body).

Caution: Grasp the hose just back of the nozzle or, when a handle is provided, grasp the handle next to the nozzle. Do not touch the metal parts of the nozzle as they become extremely cold while the extinguisher is discharging.

(4) Direct discharge at base of fire with the nozzle about 1 or 2 feet from the fire, if possible.

Caution: Although the gas is not poisonous, care should be taken to avoid breathing the vapors or gases produced by the extinguisher, especially when it is used in unventilated places.

(5) Starting at the base of the flames, move nozzle slowly from side to side and work generally upward on the flame area, but quickly return below momentarily to wipe out such rekindling as may occur so far as it may be consistent to do so with the fire conditions prevailing above.

(6) While carbon dioxide will continue to be discharged, the extinguisher is ineffective after the discharge of "snow" ceases and, if required, another extinguisher should be brought into play at this time.

Caution: This "snow" is extremely cold and should not be handled as frostbite may result.

→ (7) If the fire is extinguished before the effective discharge is completed, the discharge may be stopped by turning the handwheel to the right, releasing the trigger to its normal position, or releasing the squeeze grip, as the case may be.

(8) Any glowing embers remaining after the discharge of the gas should be snuffed out with asbestos gloves.

(9) ***Do not return discharged or partially discharged extinguishers to their mounting brackets.***

→**2.04** ***Operation from Rolling Ladder:*** To operate the carbon dioxide extinguisher from a rolling ladder, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove the extinguisher from the mounting bracket and carry it to the fire, placing it in an upright position.

(2) Position the rolling ladder so as to gain → safe and easy access to the fire.

Note: The precautionary measures necessary for the safe usage of rolling ladders shall be followed.

→ (3) Remove the guard pin from the extin-
→ guisher, when provided.

(4) If the handrail is on the right side of the ladder selected, grasp extinguisher in left hand and with right hand remove nozzle from clip and place over right shoulder as shown in Fig. 1. If the handrail is on the left side of the ladder selected, grasp the extinguisher in right hand and with left hand remove nozzle from clip and place over left shoulder.

→ (5) Ascend ladder, as shown in Fig. 2, to position where discharge can be directed at base of fire with the nozzle about 1 or 2 feet from the fire, if possible.

(6) Remove nozzle from shoulder and direct → at fire as shown in Fig. 3. To insure stability while working in this position, the arm should be braced against the side of the ladder.

(7) Proceed as described in 2.03(3) through (9).

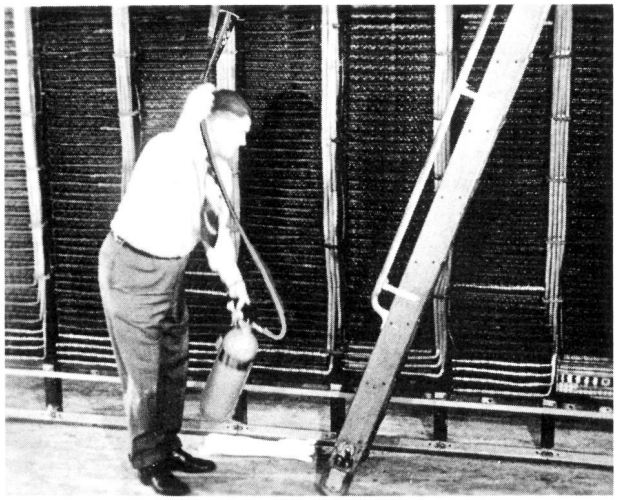

Fig. 1 – Preparing Fire Extinguisher Before Ascending Ladder

Fig. 3 – Directing Discharge Toward the Base of the Fire

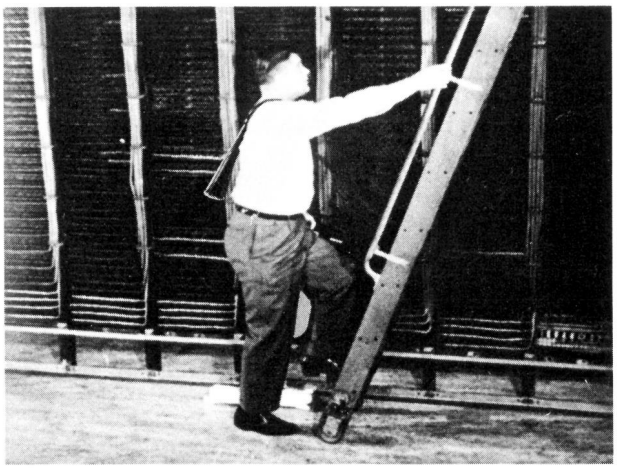

Fig. 2 – Ascending Ladder with Fire Extinguisher in Left Hand

Water-Type Extinguisher

2.05 The water-type fire extinguisher is used on fires in telephone equipment which have made some headway and which are beyond the scope of the carbon dioxide-type due to insufficient range of discharge of this extinguisher or to the lack of cooling action of the gas on deep-seated masses of burning material. The water-type extinguisher is ***not*** suitable for use on fires involving flammable liquids, oils, or greases or live electrical equipment such as power boards, power plant apparatus, billing and computing machines used in accounting centers, CAMA or AMA equipment, radio and carrier equipment, or elevator machinery.

2.06 To operate the extinguisher, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove extinguisher from mounting bracket and carry to the fire in an upright position.

(2) Invert tank after pushing aside the safety guard on those extinguishers so equipped.

(3) Hold tank by handle in the bottom with hose in other hand.

(4) Bump plunger in tank cap on floor.

(5) Direct discharge at fire from a distance of about 5 feet if possible. If not possible, move away as the stream is effective up to about 30 or 40 feet horizontally.

(6) Play stream from top down with side-to-side motion. For other than equipment fires, play stream at base of flames and follow flames with stream.

(7) Stop liquid discharge by inverting tank to normal position when fire is completely extinguished.

(8) ***Do not return discharged or partially discharged extinguishers to their mounting brackets.***

Foam-Type Extinguisher

2.07 The foam-type fire extinguisher is one of the approved types to be used on fires in locations which involve flammable liquids, such as oil, grease, kitchen fats, and gasoline. It is ***not*** suitable for use on fires involving central office equipment or live electrical equipment, such as power boards, power plant apparatus, or elevator machinery. It is suitable for use, however, on grease or kitchen fat fires on electrical heating elements whether or not the power can be turned off.

2.08 To operate the foam-type extinguisher, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove the extinguisher from its mounting bracket and carry to the fire in upright position.

(2) Hold hose and extinguisher cap handle in one hand, directing the nozzle at the fire, and invert the tank, holding it by the handle in the bottom, with the other hand.

(3) Direct the discharge at the fire from a distance such that the foam will fall lightly on the burning surface. Fighting fire from too close a distance may cause burning liquid to splash and spread fire. If fire is in a container, the discharge should be played on the inside wall of the container.

(4) If possible, walk around fire as foam is played on it.

(5) Reduce foam discharge by inverting tank to normal position when fire is completely extinguished. Some foam will continue to flow until the chemical reaction is completed, and the extinguisher will become inoperative for future use until it is recharged again.

(6) ***Do not return discharged or partially discharged extinguishers to their mounting brackets.***

Soda Acid Extinguisher

2.09 The soda acid-type extinguisher is used on paper, wood, and trash fires. The soda acid extinguisher is ***not*** suitable for use on fires involving telephone equipment, flammable liquids, oils, greases, or live electrical equipment, such as power boards, power plant apparatus, or elevator machinery.

2.10 To operate the soda acid extinguisher, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove the extinguisher from the mounting bracket and carry to the fire in an upright position.

(2) Hold hose and extinguisher cap handle in one hand, directing the nozzle at the fire, and invert the tank, holding it by the handle in the bottom, with other hand.

(3) Direct discharge at fire from a distance of 5 feet, if possible. If impossible to stand so close, move away, as the stream is effective up to about 30 feet.

(4) Play stream at base of flames and follow flames with stream.

(5) Stop liquid discharge by inverting tank to normal position when fire is completely extinguished. The remaining gas may continue to escape until the supply is exhausted, and the extinguisher will become inoperative for future use until it is recharged again.

(6) ***Do not return discharged or partially discharged extinguishers to their mounting brackets.***

First Aid Fire Hose Stations

2.11 Fire hoses at first aid hose stations are intended for use only to combat fires beyond the effective scope of extinguishers. Whenever the use of a fire hose is required, ***call the Fire Department immediately.***

2.12 ***Nozzles:*** Two types of nozzles are in general use at first aid base stations, solid stream- and nonadjustable spray-type.

(a) Solid stream nozzles for the 1-1/2 inch first aid hose are intended for use on wood, cloth, or paper fires and are not to be used in telephone equipment areas, AMA centers, Electronic Data Processing centers, radio or TV or power rooms.

(b) Nonadjustable spray-type nozzles are designed to go from the shutoff position to the spray pattern without passing through a solid stream. The spray nozzle is intended for use on wood, paper, oil, or grease fires. In addition, the nonadjustable spray-type nozzle can be used in telephone equipment areas, AMA centers, Electronic Data Processing centers, radio or TV or power rooms.

2.13 To place the hose in service from semiautomatic hose racks (one man), proceed as follows:

(1) Open the hose valve wide and, grasping the hose nozzle firmly, draw the hose line toward the fire, preventing any kinks. The valve of the spray type nozzle, if provided, should be open.

(2) Water is automatically released as the last few feet of hose are pulled from the rack.

(3) Fight the fire from the top down, confining the water to the fire area as much as possible.

2.14 To place hose in service from nonautomatic hose racks (two men), proceed as follows:

(1) One man should grasp the nozzle firmly and draw the hose line toward the fire. If the nonadjustable spray-type nozzle is provided, the nozzle valve should be opened.

(2) When the hose is fully released from the rack or reel and all kinks straightened out, the hose valve should be opened by the man stationed at the valve.

(3) Fight the fire from the top down, confining the water to the fire area as much as possible.

2.14.1 To place hose in service from nonautomatic hose racks (one man) where the nonadjustable spray-type nozzle is provided proceed as follows:

(1) Grasp the nozzle firmly and draw the hose line toward the fire. The nozzle valve should be closed.

(2) When the hose is fully released from the hose rack or reel and all kinks straightened out the hose valve should be opened.

(3) Grasp the nozzle firmly and open the nozzle valve.

(4) Fight the fire from the top down, confining the water to the fire area as much as possible.

Asbestos Gloves

2.15 Asbestos gloves are used for extinguishing small fires in telephone equipment and for snuffing out small quantities of glowing embers after the flames have been smothered with a carbon dioxide extinguisher. Gloves should be employed only where it is reasonably certain that they will be adequate as compared to the use of gas or water.

Caution: Do not attempt to use asbestos gloves to protect the hands when handling carbon dioxide extinguishers.

2.16 To use the asbestos gloves, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove gloves from container and carry to the fire.

(2) In most cases, small fires should be extinguished with the carbon dioxide extinguisher. When gloves are to be used, place one on each hand and snuff out fire. Gloves may also be used as a barrier to prevent the spread of small fires by placing them in the path of the flames.

(3) Do not use gloves on fires involving live electrical equipment such as power boards, power plant apparatus, or elevator machinery.

(4) Return gloves to container after use if they are in suitable condition.

Tarpaulins

2.17 Tarpaulins are used to protect telephone equipment and in some cases other important apparatus or records from possible damage from water due to fire, roof or plumbing leaks, or other emergency conditions.

2.18 To use the portable tarpaulins, proceed as follows:

(1) Remove one or both tarpaulins from the container and carry to the required location.

(2) Place tarpaulin over equipment to be protected and, if necessary, secure it in place using the eyelets provided in the hem and the tie cords folded with the tarpaulin.

(3) After emergency has passed, dry the tarpaulins thoroughly and return to container. Tarpaulins should not be dried over radiators or gas heaters.

Adjacent Fires

2.19 When a fire is detected adjacent to a telephone building, report the fire and, depending on the size of the fire, proceed as follows on the side or sides of the building exposed:

(1) All automatic rolling fire shutters should be checked to see if they are closed. If a shutter has ***not*** operated, release it by tripping the release chain located on the inside of the window.

(2) All manually-operated shutters should be closed and fastened.

(3) If the air intake for the ventilating system is on the side or sides of the building exposed, shut off the system and close all manually-operated louvers.

(4) If a building is not equipped with fire shutters, close all open windows and roll the cloth shades or draw the venetian blinds all the way up. If possible, draw aside any drapes or curtains provided.

(5) Close all open doors and take such other precautions necessary for the protection of the building.