

# NAFED Survey Results

For the past two years, NAFED has been collecting survey data on two very important issues concerning portable fire extinguishers. As these surveys get tabulated, we like to share the information with our members.

## Fire Extinguisher Incident Reports

The first survey, called the Portable/Wheeled Fire Extinguisher Incident Report, is part of NAFED's continuing effort to collect data on the use of fire extinguishers. This survey was originally initiated in 1976 in conjunction with OSHA. The results of this initial study were reported in 1979 and included data on the use of 14,091 fire extinguishers on 5,400 fires. The study showed that fire extinguishers were successfully used as the sole means of fire extinguishment 94% of the time.

Two follow-up studies were also conducted in 1985 and 1996. In the summer of 2006, NAFED again initiated data collection on the effectiveness of fire extinguishers. This is still an ongoing process and when a sufficient number of survey results are collected they will be tabulated and the results published. Preliminary tabulation of approximately 1,000 collected surveys indicates that fire extinguishers were used successfully as the sole means of extinguishment in over 90% of reported incidents, still a high percentage.

## Results for Internal Maintenance Reports

The second survey NAFED is conducting relates to the internal maintenance of fire extinguishers. Early this year NAFED hired Readex Research of Stillwater, Minnesota (see sidebar) to tabulate the results of 27,067 fire extinguishers that underwent

internal maintenance. NAFED is still collecting this data and will periodically update the survey results.

The internal maintenance survey was developed with the help of NAFED's portables committee and other industry volunteers. Since we had this opportunity to collect maintenance data we expanded the survey to include any and all types of fire extinguishers that underwent an internal maintenance, not just stored pressure extinguishers that require a six-year internal maintenance.

The data collected on the survey include: type of extinguisher reported; whether it was a wheeled unit; if the pres-

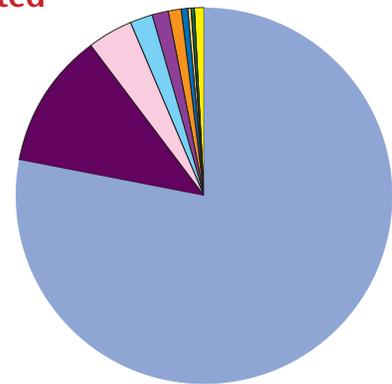
sure gauge was operable; the reason for the internal maintenance; and what conditions were observed. The survey report is based on 27,067 extinguishers.

## Conditions Observed

Some fire extinguishers must be removed from service and condemned prior to conducting any internal maintenance because of exterior damage or a factory recall, or because updated standards identify them as obsolete. 1017 or 4% of the extinguishers reported were condemned prior to internal maintenance due to external corrosion or denting.

### Type of Extinguisher Reported

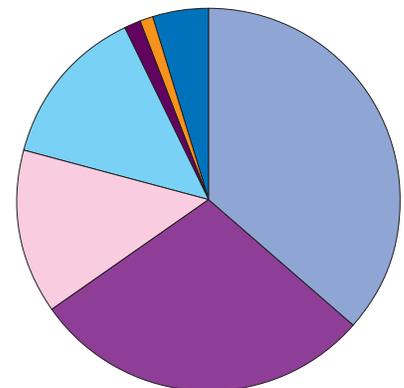
- Stored Pressure ABC (21,171)
- Carbon Dioxide (3,130)
- Clean Agent (1,105)
- Pressurized Water (478)
- Stored Pressure BC (417)
- Wet Chem/ K Class (256)
- Cartridge Operated (183)
- Loaded Stream (57)
- Water Mist (38)
- Foam (37)
- Stored Pres. D Class (16)
- No Answer (179)



### Reasons for Internal Maintenance

- Scheduled Hydrotest (9,917)
- Scheduled 6 Year (7,763)
- Recharge (3,774)
- 1st Scheduled 6 Year\* (3,662)
- Insp./Main. Concern (386)
- Multiple Answers (296)
- No Answer (1,269)

\* Only stored pressure with 12 year hydrotest frequency.



Of the total 27,067 extinguishers included in the survey, 5,364 (20%) had a maintenance issue occur, 14,405 (53%) had no maintenance concerns observed, and 6,013 (22%) received no response.

Please remember that this report is just a general tabulation of the survey results. There is also data for how conditions observed break down according to the type of extinguisher.

For example, while 25% of extinguish-

ers serviced exhibited some type of maintenance issue, the individual percentage can vary depending on extinguisher type. Some types of extinguisher had a maintenance issue occur as often as 73%. NAFED has also shared this information with the Fire Equipment Manufacturers Association (FEMA) for their use.

### Keep Them Coming!

This is an ongoing survey, so please continue to send in the survey forms. NAFED wishes to express our appreciation to all of the service companies that contributed data to this survey. These companies are located throughout the United States and Canada. If you have not participated in any of the NAFED surveys, please do so. We are the only organization that is collecting data on the effectiveness of fire extinguishers and the need for qualified service. Filling out the Portable/Wheeled Fire Extinguisher Incident Report and the Internal Maintenance Survey is quick and easy online at [www.nafed.org/surveys](http://www.nafed.org/surveys). ♦

### About the Survey Tabulation:

NAFED only collects the survey forms. To ensure the data is reported fairly, all tabulation is performed by an independent research firm.

Tabulation was completed by an outside independent firm, Readex Research.

Readex Research, founded in 1947, is a nationally recognized independent research company located in Minnesota.

The survey was conducted and the report was prepared by Readex in accordance with acceptable research standards and practices.

