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Bulletin

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To: THE FIRE PROTECTION INDUSTRY of UTAH, STATE FIRE CHIEFS and ALL FIRE MARSHALS

From: The Office of the State Fire Marshal

Subject: General Fire Extinguishers – Removal from Service

The company manufacturing General Fire Extinguishers filed chapter 7 in 2001 and was auctioned off. The Company that bought the General Fire Extinguisher brand name, Amerex, chose not to continue manufacturing the General brand, extinguisher parts, recharge agents or to maintain manufacturer service manuals or bulletins. Due to these actions, the UL listing for General Fire Extinguishers was pulled and no longer valid. This did not mean the extinguishers were not operable, just that replacement parts and recharge agent were no longer being manufactured.

Some fire protection companies chose to eliminate service for the General products due to the now considerable liability surrounding the existing products with their lack of serviceability. Many companies, however, continue to “serve their customers” by servicing existing General Fire Extinguishers with remaining “new” parts and or residue agent maintained for that purpose.

NFPA 10, 2007 and the 2010 editions, under the heading “Obsolete Fire Extinguishers” states the following:

“Any fire extinguisher that can no longer be serviced in accordance with the manufacturer’s maintenance manual is considered obsolete and shall be removed from service.”

The ruling that has commonly been followed is that “the general fire extinguishers must be removed from service when the six-year maintenance or hydrostatic tests are due, or if the extinguisher needs recharging or does not pass the annual inspection for any reason.” Since two “six year service cycles” have now passed since production ceased. The probability of getting new parts and workable recharge agent is rare. It is time to place all General Fire Extinguishers in their rightful place and call them what they are, Obsolete!

With consideration of the means, ability and with reasonable, prudent and planned care for each customer and owner, General Fire Extinguishers shall be removed from service.

Any owner or fire extinguisher service company may contact this office at 801-284-6349, with questions regarding this matter.

This Safety Intervention bulletin is sponsored by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and is to alert all – honesty, quality and reasonable customer service instills longevity and success within the industry.