

FIRE EXTINGUISHER WARNING

An information session on various fire safety products was recently held at the OFM's head office in Toronto. Among the products discussed was the Tundra™ fire extinguishing spray. Below is information provided by OFM Fire Protection Engineer Dave Horne regarding this product.

The Tundra™ fire extinguishing spray is packaged in a 414 ml (14 fluid ounce) aerosol-like container (www.firstalert.com). It is marketed in Canada by Dicon Global (www.diconglobal.com).

The Tundra™ product has been marketed for home use, and primarily for kitchen cooking fires. Product demonstrations indicate that it is capable of extinguishing a fire in a 12-inch diameter skillet containing vegetable oil that was raised to its autoignition temperature. However, because the extinguisher is water based, there is an initial unexpected flare up that could result in injuries and burns if the person using the product has not been trained to use it.

The Fire Code requires that fire extinguishers be listed (6.2.1.1.) and be rated and identified in conformance with CAN/ULC-S508, "Standard for the Rating and Fire Testing of Fire Extinguishers" (6.2.2.1.). The Tundra™ product is neither listed by a recognized testing authority nor rated to the tests of ULC S-508. Consequently, the product cannot be used to meet installation requirements for portable extinguishers found in the Ontario Fire Code.

As well, the product does not have a gauge or indicator to assure that it remains charged. It also lacks an anti-tamper seal to provide visible evidence of tampering.

The Ontario Fire Code does not have installation requirements for fire extinguishers in dwelling units, nor does it regulate products such as Tundra™ in the home. The Fire Code does not restrict the extinguishing products that an occupant may choose to bring into his or her home.

The OFM strongly recommends that anyone who chooses to have an extinguisher in his or her home check that it be appropriately listed and rated. This will ensure that the product will perform as rated through the standardized testing performed by the recognized testing authority.

The OFM strongly recommends that members of the public **not** use fire extinguishers in the event of a home fire, unless they have received training. Too frequently, people are injured trying to fight a fire in their home. In the event of a fire, the OFM recommends that everyone leave the home as quickly as possible and call 9-1-1 from outside the home. As such, it is vitally important that every home have working smoke alarms on every storey and outside all sleeping areas and a home fire escape plan that everyone in the home has practiced.