

Elyria Fire Department investigation leads to extinguisher recall



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Millions of commonly sold fire extinguishers are being recalled thanks in part to an investigation by the Elyria Fire Department of a September 2014 house fire.

The recalled fire extinguishers, announced last month, are sold by Kidde Safety and involve 31 models of plastic-valve disposable fire extinguishers commonly found at stores including Home Depot, Menard and Wal-Mart. About 4.6 million units have been sold in the U.S. and 175,000 in Canada between August 2013 and November 2014.

It was at Home Depot where an elderly Elyria woman purchased her Kidde fire extinguisher. Then, on Sept. 18, 2014, a small fire started at the woman's home at 19 Valley Forge Lane.

The fire reached up above the woman's stove to her range hood and cabinet. It was put out by Elyria firefighters, but the woman told fire investigators that after being alerted by a smoke detector, she tried to put the fire out herself with an extinguisher but was unable to discharge it.

She left the house and called 911.

Elyria fire Lt. Rick Thrasher inspected the extinguisher and also was unable to discharge it after two attempts. The extinguisher finally discharged after a third try, but the handle was extremely difficult to depress, said a report from Capt. Carl Mandoke, the Fire Department's fire training and safety officer.

The extinguisher was taken for follow-up investigation by the Fire Prevention Bureau. Mandoke's report said Inspector Scott Vincze started researching the fire extinguisher and contacted Kidde, which wanted the fire extinguisher sent to its test facility. Vincze also filed a report with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

It was later learned Kidde received 11 reports about the fire extinguishers failing to discharge as expected. The problem was traced back to a faulty valve component.

No one has been injured because of the fire extinguishers not working, but they are still being pulled off the shelves.

"Kidde has made this issue a high priority, with a number of teams assigned to investigate, resolve and communicate the issue," a statement from Kidde said. "In a small number of instances, Kidde found that a supplier built a component that is out of specification. Follow-up field testing found a low risk of the potential extinguishers not working as designed. However, there is no way to identify which units may fail to discharge as designed. Out of an abundance of caution, we have stopped shipment of affected extinguishers, are working cooperatively with the CPSC to recall any units on store shelves, and are working to replace affected units in homes."

Fire Chief Rich Benton said the work from fire scene to follow-up investigation were key factors in making the recall happen.

Contact Lisa Roberson at 329-7121 or lroberson@chroniclet.com.

How to tell if your fire extinguisher has been recalled:

According to Kidde, the recall involves 31 models of Kidde disposable fire extinguishers with Zytel black plastic valves. The recalled extinguishers are red, white or silver in color and are either ABC or BC rated. The ratings can be found to the right of the nameplate. Manufacture dates included in the recall are July 23, 2013 through Oct. 15, 2014. A 10-digit date code is stamped on the side of the cylinder, near the bottom. Digits five through nine represent the day and year of manufacture in DDDYY format. Date codes for recalled units manufactured in 2013 are XXXX 20413 X through XXXX 36513 X and 2014 are XXXX 00114 X through XXXX 28814 X. A nameplate affixed to the front of the fire extinguisher has one of the following model numbers:

10BC		
1A 10BC		M110 Twin
1A 10BCW	FX10	M5 Twin
2A10BC	FX10BC	Mariner 10
5BC	FX10K	Mariner 110
5BCW	FX210	Mariner 5
FA10G	FX210R	Mariner 5 G
FA110	FX210W	RESSP
FA5B	FX340GW	XL 5MR
FC10	FX340SC	
FC110	FX5II	SOURCE: Kidde
FC5	KFH Twin	
FH/ RESSP		

Description of Affected Item: XL Models: FX340SC, FX340H, FX340GW, XL5MR, FX210R, FX340SC-2, FX210W, XL2.5TCZ-4, E-340-3
Location of Manufacture: Mexico

EXTINGUISHER IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

