

2.8.2 Classification of fires

Fires are classified according to the fuel source. Different countries use different classification codes. Some of those used in the UK and Europe are shown in Table 1.

Classification	Characteristics	How it is extinguished			
A	Fires of solid materials such as paper, wood, coal and natural fibres. These fires usually produce embers.	Water	Wet chemical	Foam spray	ABC powder
B	Fires of flammable liquids or liquefied solids such as petrol, oil, grease, fats and paint.	Carbon dioxide		Foam spray	ABC powder
C	Fires of gases or liquefied gases such as methane, propane, butane and mains gas.	Gas fires should not be extinguished; this may leave unburned gases as an explosion risk.		Turn off the gas supply.	
D	Fires where the fuel is a metal such as aluminium, sodium, potassium or magnesium.	Special extinguishing media are required depending upon the metal involved.			
F	Fires fuelled by cooking fats, such as deep-fat frying.		Wet chemical		

Table 1: Some UK classifications of fires and their corresponding extinguishing media