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Fire Suppression Tool Can Disable Fire in Seconds

March 15, PROVIDENCE, R.I.—A fire suppression device was presented at the Commercial Marine Expo at the Providence Convention Center. The presenter, Fred Mattera, from American Fire Suppression, Inc., explained the device and showed videos of fires on boats and in houses being stopped by the aerosol X-tinguish FST (Fire Suppression Tool).

Water cools the fuel in a fire eventually, but doesn't guarantee it will not be rekindled. Conventional fire extinguishers choke off the oxygen supply to the fuel. The FST device works by disabling the fuel's ability to burn. A pin with a ring grip is mounted in the handle. Pulling that pin out initiates the ignition process which starts 8 seconds later. The FST is started by an electrical charge sent to the core of a solid block of potassium bicarbonate. That 1660-degree charge starts the conversion of the solid block into an aerosol powder. There is no pyrotechnic ignition in starting the aerosol conversion.

That aerosol powder, which resembles white smoke and is composed of very tiny particles, pours out of ports on the sides of the device. The powder cloud expands filling the space the fire is in. In 40 seconds enough aerosol is emitted to fill a 5,300 cubic foot space, which is a space measuring more than 25' X 20' X 10'. The aerosol powder covers and cools the fuel. The device does not need to be in the middle of the fire. It can be left inside a door and the door closed to contain the aerosol.

"The key is that the device drops the temperature of a fire from 1000 degrees to 300 degrees in one minute," said Mattera. "The aerosol takes the heat out of a fire, it does not take out the oxygen."

On a vessel with a fire down below high temperature heat could be roaring up the companionway. Going down to fight a fire could be futile and fatal. Pulling the pin and throwing an FST down into the fire avoids going into the fire and can get the fire under control in minutes. If the FST lands in bilge water it will continue to function. Mattera said, "The best way to fight a fire is the safe way."

The 11.24 pound FST measures 15"H X 8"W X 5". It comes in a foam-lined briefcase where it is stored until used. The FST is not pressurized, has a 15-year shelf life, the battery lasts 5 years (the dealer sends out battery renewal time notices). Videos of an FST suppressing a fire are available at www.afsuppression.com/fst-fire-extinguisher-videos.html.



The Fire Suppression Tool. The device can be thrown into a fire like a grenade. But instead of an explosion a raging fire is under control in a minute by aerosol emissions that pour out of the device.

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