



AUTOMATIC FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fact Sheet Number 11

Car fires are relatively uncommon; especially those that start by a fault in the vehicle, and motorists are seldom injured as they can quickly get out of the vehicle. However, some disabled people may be more at risk because they may take significantly longer to leave a vehicle than an able-bodied person.

Research has shown that the majority of non-deliberate, non-crash fires start in the engine bay, with very few starting in the passenger compartment. Early detection and extinction is critical and generally motorists are able to put out such fires with a fire extinguisher. However, disabled motorists may not be able to get out of the vehicle, go to the front of the vehicle and direct a fire extinguisher into the engine bay.

There are a number of automatic fire extinguishers on the market that may be more suitable for use by disabled motorists who are unable to use hand held fire extinguishers for fires starting under the bonnet of a vehicle. These are called 'automatic' because the motorist needs to take no, or little, action if a fire starts. They work in a variety of ways, but usually have a system of tubes under the bonnet. When a fire starts, these tubes break and release the fire retardant.

Motorists are advised to avoid prolonged exposure to any fire retardant, and should always attempt to get out of a burning vehicle.

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