

QCC COMMITTEE on COMPUTER RESOURCES

An Academic Senate Standing Committee

Minutes

Meeting of April 17, 2002 12:30pm in M-401

Attending: Philip Pecorino, Patrick Wallach, Sandra Marcus, Bruce Naples, George Sherman

Absent: Hamid Namdar , Mark Van Ells,

- 1. The Minutes of Meeting April 10, 2002 were reviewed and approved.**
- 2. The Chairperson made his report**
- 3. The committee approved sending a recommendation concerning the coverage of college servers on weekends to the college administration and include it in its report to the Academic Senate**
- 4. The committee approved sending a recommendation concerning the need for appropriate fire response materials being available in computer facilities to the college administration and include it in its report to the Academic Senate**
- 5. The Committee set the Date, Time and Location for next meeting (May 15, 2002 at 12:30 in M-129)**

QCC Academic Senate
COMPUTER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

At the current time QCC has computer servers that host and operate the college website and the distance learning instructional program.

The servers provide for these services, among others:

- **online registration**
- **access to email for faculty and students**
- **websites with instructional materials placed there by faculty**
- **the Blackboard Course Management Program for Online Courses**

Over weekends there is no personnel to attend to these servers should a problem develop. When the servers have “gone down” there has been no access to those services until Monday morning when personnel attend to the servers and take the appropriate actions to restore services. During the period of time the servers are not operating the students in online classes are in effect “locked out” of their classrooms during times when instruction and exercises are scheduled. For students needing access in order to complete their assignments on time this is a major problem.

During the weekends the College could designate certain personnel, perhaps on a rotating basis, to monitor the servers from off campus and should the servers need attention that person would go to campus and do what was required to restore the services.

In this manner there would be coverage without needing to have someone on campus over weekends when not needed.

Motion:

to send a recommendation to the Office of Academic Affairs and to the Office of Finance and Administration to provide for weekend coverage for the college servers.

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Fires in rooms with computer equipment.

The use of the fire hoses in the various QCC buildings is not the correct response to an electrical fire in a computer facility.

The approach used by the NYFD and recommended throughout the world is to use other chemical fire suppressors. Such as described below. (see attachment)

Motion:

A.) To send a request to the Director of Security to have the appropriate measures in place for responding to fires in computer facilities that would not risk further re-ignitions and would not cause additional damage to QCC equipment and facilities as would the use of water hoses.

B.) A report on this request would appear in the Committees report to the Senate.

Which kind of extinguisher should I use?

First recognize that there are four different kinds of fires:

- **Class A fires are ordinary materials like burning paper, lumber, cardboard, plastics etc.**
- **Class B fires involve flammable or combustible liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, and common organic solvents used in the laboratory.**
- **Class C fires involve energized electrical equipment, such as appliances, switches, panel boxes, power tools, hot plates and stirrers. Water is a particularly dangerous extinguishing medium for class C fires because of the risk of electrical shock.**
- **Class D fires involve combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, potassium and sodium as well as pyrophoric organometallic reagents such as alkyllithiums,**

Grignards and diethylzinc. These materials burn at high temperatures and will react violently with water, air, and/or other chemicals. Handle with care!!

Some fires may be a combination of these! Your fire extinguishers should have ABC ratings on them. These ratings will often have numbers on them that look something like "3-A:40-B:C". Higher numbers mean more firefighting power. In this example, the extinguisher has a good firefighting capacity for Class A, B and C fires.

Here are typical uses for common extinguishers:

- **Water extinguishers (not pictured and not found in laboratories) are suitable for class A (paper etc.) fires, but not for class B, C and D such as burning liquids, electrical fires or reactive metal fires. In these cases, the flames will be spread or the hazard made greater!**
- **Dry chemical extinguishers are useful for class ABC fires and are your best all around choice. They have an advantage over CO₂ extinguishers in that they leave a blanket of non-flammable material on the extinguished material which reduces the likelihood of reignition. They also make a terrible mess -- but if the choice is a fire or a mess, take the mess! Note that there are two kinds of dry chemical extinguishers!**
 - **Type BC fire extinguishers contain sodium or potassium bicarbonate.**
 - **Type ABC fire extinguishers contain ammonium phosphate.**
- **CO₂ (carbon dioxide) extinguishers are for class B and C fires. They don't work very well on class A fires because the material usually reignites. CO₂ extinguishers have an advantage over dry chemical in that they leave behind no harmful residue -- a good choice for an electrical fire on a computer or other delicate instrument. Note that CO₂ is a bad choice for a flammable metal fires such as Grignard reagents, alkyllithiums and sodium metal because CO₂**

reacts with these materials. CO₂ extinguishers are not approved for class D fires!

To get an idea for what could happen, take a look at this  [General Chemistry demonstration page](#) that includes a QuickTime movie of a magnesium metal fire contained inside a block of solid CO₂!

- **Metal/Sand Extinguishers are for flammable metals (class D fires) and work by simply smothering the fire. You should have an approved class D unit if you are working with flammable metals.**

Check out the potential fire hazards in your area. Is there an extinguisher available? Do you know how to operate it? Are your extinguishers suitable for the fires you may encounter? If not, you'll want to contact your campus or corporate Fire Marshal's office.

Typical small lab fires (in a hood or on a bench) can easily be controlled by a dry chemical (ABC) or CO₂ extinguisher provided that you are properly trained.

Here is a website with more information on a particular portable fire extinguisher: <http://www.amerex-fire.com/sales/halotron.html>