

Extending fire extinguisher life



Words & photo: David Mackrell

How do you stop your fire extinguisher from becoming extinct?

If you compete in any form of motor sport, the regulations demand your fire extinguisher is either serviced or replaced every three years. (In some cases, it's every two.)

Up until now, when I've remembered to check – and not been rapped over the knuckles by a scrutineer – it's meant a cursed dash to get a replacement.

Now, extinguishers aren't that expensive. But even after a few years of competition, you can end up with a litter of these devices sitting around the house. *And the really stupid part of this is that they are all most likely still in working condition.*

So, let's go back to the start. The rules say you have to service or replace them. If, like me, you always thought servicing sounded like a good, sensible plan, you were still left to wonder where on earth this could be done. *Well, wonder no more.*

The answer, for me, was just around the corner. Sort of. It's *Fire Equipment Services* in Bayswater, which turns out to be a

division of Fire Rescue Victoria (the new name for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade).

I called them up and it's really straightforward. Just take your fire extinguisher to them and come back in 30 minutes to an hour. They'll test it and certify it to pass any scrutineer. As you can see from the photo, it comes back to you with a new seal and dated addenda to prove it's been given the once-over professionally. (Just to be on the safe side, I also asked for a receipt, as the Motorsport Australia regs demand paperwork be produced if requested by a particularly scrupulous scrutineer.)

The hardest part of the process was finding the place. The address I had was factory 27, 885 Mountain Highway, Bayswater. But when you get there, 885 is the massive *Siemens* building. Absolutely no signs of FES at all. After a couple of laps of the carpark, I gingerly pointed *Mimi Miata* down the guarded driveway on the far right-hand side of the building: the second entry point. (Still no signage.)

The guard turned out to be a nice bloke who assured me I was in the right place and sent me down the drive towards factory 27 and *Fire Equipment Services*. He quickly added: "... and, please, keep the speed down". (He mustn't have seen me on the track or he'd know that wasn't necessary.)

And the price, I hear you ask? Just \$22, which I thought was very reasonable. So, for about the price (or less) of a new fire extinguisher, you can not only keep your old one and stop it from becoming extinct, you can also save yourself buying a new one and finding it doesn't fit on the @\$%& mounting you've already got in your car. ■

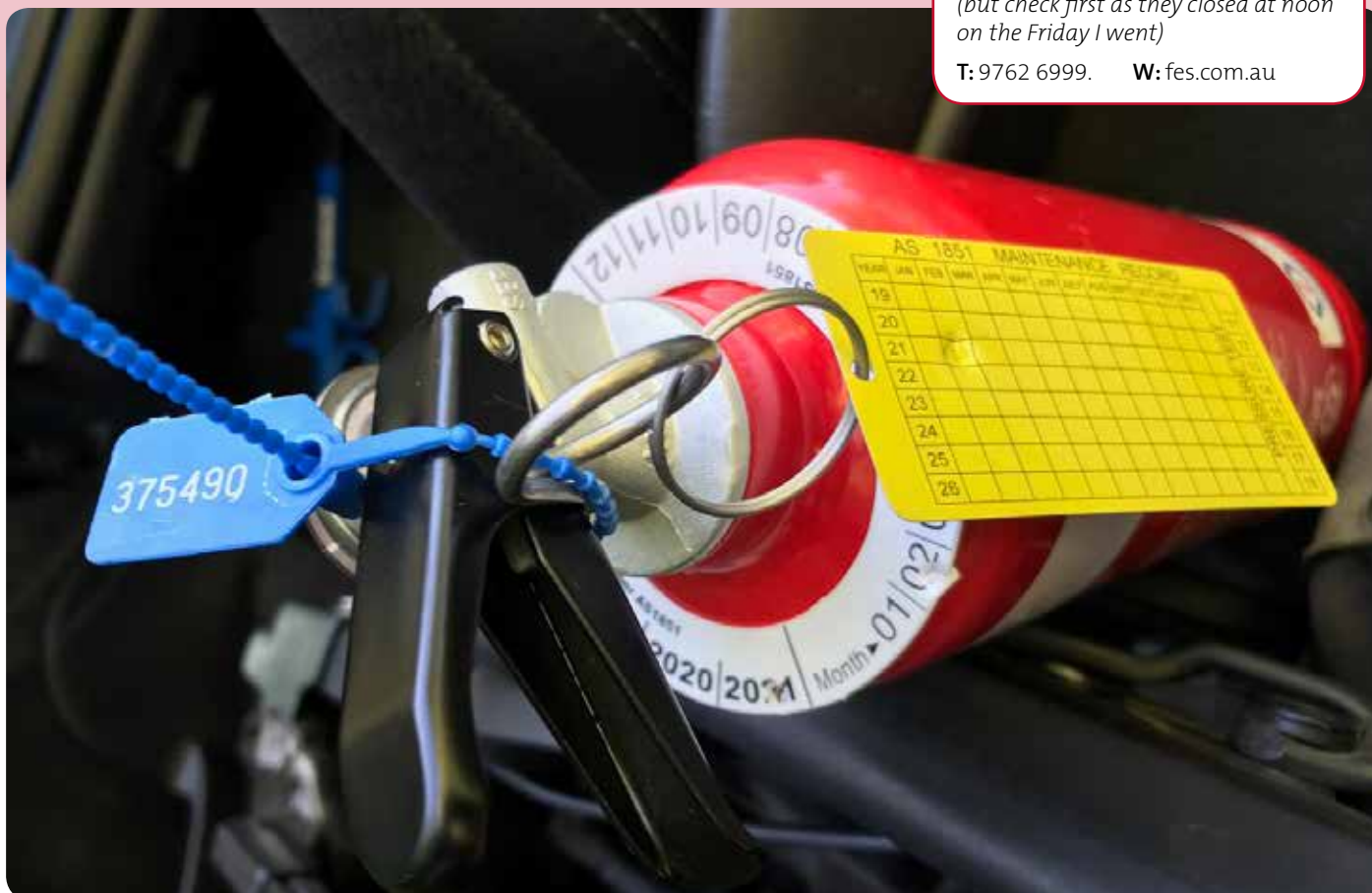
The contact details:

Fire Equipment Services
(part of Fire Rescue Victoria)

Address: Factory 27 behind 885 Mountain Highway, Bayswater (second entry)

Open: 7am to 4pm Monday to Friday (but check first as they closed at noon on the Friday I went)

T: 9762 6999. **W:** fes.com.au



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