
Subject: Protective Equipment

Date Issued: October 8, 2020

Reviewed: October 8, 2020

Deletes: September 10, 2020

Total Pages: 6

Approval: James D. Large, Fire Chief

- I. Protective equipment will include:
 - A. Helmet
 - B. Structural Coat
 - C. Structural Pants
 - D. Overhaul/Extrication/EMS Coat
 - E. Class II harness or Class I waist belt
 - F. Boots
 - G. Gloves
 - H. SCBA mask
 - I. Nomex hood
 - J. Accountability tags
 - K. High visibility traffic vest
- II. Full protective equipment is required to be worn at all fires and extrication emergencies until permitted to do otherwise by the incident commander.
 - A. The Velcro apparatus unit and number are part of the accountability system. All personnel will wear the appropriate apparatus unit and number on the front of the helmet shield in accordance with unit assignment while on duty.
 1. The helmet shield unit number will be returned to the apparatus at the end of the shift for use by oncoming members.
 2. Station Captains must make every effort to ensure (2) spare apparatus numbers for each unit assigned to their station are kept in the station in the event of loss.
 3. In the event of loss, additional unit numbers may be obtained by contacting the Safety and Training Division and providing an Unwanted Incident Report explaining the loss of equipment.
- III. Issuance of Protective Equipment:**
 - A. All protective clothing i.e. SCBA mask, protective hood, gloves, structural pants, structural coat, suspenders, helmet, and boots will be issued by the Safety and Training Division.
 - B. During evening hours or when a Training Officer cannot respond to the Shop, the District Chief or LR can issue fire department Shop loaner gear (fit test to be done when necessary).

C. After normal business hours, it is suggested that loaner gear would be the first step in replacing the damaged gear. The Shop houses the loaner structural gear supply.

D. If there is no loaner gear available:

1. During daytime business hours (Monday thru Friday), have the firefighter contact the Safety and Training Division to place an order for new gear. The Safety and Training Chief or a Training Officer will approve the order for new gear.

IV. Marking of Protective Equipment:

A. The following guidelines are the prescribed manner for marking structural gear:

1. STRUCTURAL COATS – A Velcro or snap type name tag will be issued by the Shop or Training Division. Brand new gear will have the wearer’s name printed on the interior factory label.
 - a. Replacement name tag will be obtained through the Training Division after the Unwanted Incident Report is completed.
2. STRUCTURAL PANTS – Name and PIN number will be written in black indelible marker near or on the label inside of the structural pants. Exception: brand new gear that already has the wearer’s name printed on the interior factory label.
3. OVERHAUL/EXTRICATION/EMS COATS - Name and PIN number will be written in black indelible marker near or on the label inside of the coat. Exception: brand new gear that already has the wearer’s name printed on the interior factory label.
4. GLOVES – Last name will be marked with black indelible marker across the wristlets.
5. SCBA MASK – Last name will be marked above the lens with a white indelible marker pen.
6. NOMEX HOODS – Personnel are NOT permitted to mark the protective hoods. Names will be marked on the manufacturers label once assigned.
7. BOOTS –Boots should have the last name with indelible marker on the inside of the boot.
8. HELMETS:
 - a. Operations - Last name will be across the front of the helmet shield for all firefighters with the exception of probationary firefighters.
 - i. Authorized stickers/identifiers include:
 - Paramedic emblem on each side.
 - Velcro unit assignment number on the front of the helmet shield.
 - American flag on the rear, left side.
 - Dive, Hazmat, or TRT sticker on the rear, right side.
 - Union sticker on the rear of the helmet.
 - No other emblems, decals, or markings are to be on the helmet.
 - b. Rescue – Last name will be across topside of back bill with black vinyl letters
 - i. Authorized stickers include:
 - Paramedic emblem on each side.
 - Velcro unit assignment number on the front of the helmet

- American flag on the rear, left side.
- No other emblems, decals, or markings are to be on the helmet.

V. Use of Protective Equipment:

- A. All personnel engaged in or exposed to the hazards of structural firefighting or any other situation which could present a hazard to personnel shall utilize their full protective clothing which includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Sworn personnel: Pants, coat (structural/overhaul), helmet, boots, gloves, traffic vest, and eye protection which meet the appropriate NFPA Standard and ANSI standard.
 2. Non-sworn Rescue personnel: Coat (Rescue), helmet, traffic vest, and eye protection which meet the appropriate NFPA Standard and ANSI standard.
- B. Protective collars and helmet flaps will be utilized to provide neck protection.
- C. Chin straps will be utilized when the helmet is worn.
- D. Protective hoods shall be used whenever the SCBA face piece is donned.
 1. The only exception to this would be when the SCBA is used inside a fully encapsulated suit with the approval of the HazMat Officer.
- E. The department will provide one pair of NFPA compliant firefighting gloves, one pair of extrication gloves, and one pair of leather work gloves (a non-firefighting glove) to all personnel.
 1. These are the only authorized gloves to be worn while on duty.
 2. The exceptions are pre-approved specialty team gloves, which will be worn only during emergencies involving that specific specialty team (i.e. Dive, HazMat, TRT).
 3. An Unwanted Incident Report must be completed and submitted via the chain of command for gloves that are lost or damaged.
- F. The Incident Commander, pump operator, and support personnel at the command post, are the only Fire Rescue personnel to be permitted in the hazard area (non IDLH and non-HazMat) without full personal protective equipment and only if safety conditions permit, but the helmet should be worn by all personnel at incident scenes. This includes all Fire Rescue personnel regardless of rank.
- G. Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) shall be used by all personnel working in areas where:
 1. The atmosphere is hazardous (IDLH).
 2. The atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous.
 3. The atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous.
 4. Areas where the atmosphere is hazardous will include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Vehicle fires
 - b. Dumpster/trash fires
 - c. Overhaul
 - d. Exposure to any chemical
 - e. Structure fires
 5. Areas where the atmosphere can rapidly become hazardous will include, but not limited to:
 - a. Roof areas during ventilation
 - b. Areas where a container rupture or explosion may occur
 - c. L.P, natural gas, or other fuel leak
 - d. Below-grade rescue
 6. The required use of SCBA means that the user must have the face piece in

place and be on air from the SCBA.

- a. Wearing an SCBA without the face piece in place does not satisfy this requirement and should be permitted only under conditions in which the immediate safety of the atmosphere is assured and is approved by the incident commander or safety officer

The high visibility traffic vest will be worn during incidents that occur on the roadway. The only exception to wearing the traffic vest is when there is exposure to flame or hazardous materials, i.e. vehicle fire or vehicle accident with spilled fuel as a primary hazard. On all vehicle accidents and on any other incident where a potential exists for our personnel to be near the flow of traffic, one of the following shall be worn:

7. High visibility Fire Rescue traffic vest
8. Structural or EMS coat with high visibility traffic vest worn over the structural coat for extrication/rescue situations.
9. Personnel directly exposed to fire, and/or hazardous materials may wear the structural firefighting structural gear in lieu of the ANSI approved high visibility traffic vest.

VI. Care and Maintenance of Protective Clothing:

- A. All protective clothing shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
 1. Instructions are available from the Safety and Training Division.
 2. Structural/EMS coats and pants shall NOT be machine laundered by the individual wearer.
 3. Structural/EMS coats and pants will be sent into the fire department Shop for cleaning on an annually scheduled basis.
 4. In the event of an IDLH environment exposure, structural/EMS coats and pants are to be sent to the fire department Shop for cleaning immediately after the event, per NFPA standard 1851 7.1.1.2a and 7.1.1.2b.
 5. Personnel are to switch into their respective second set of structural firefighting gear when dropping off their dirty gear for cleaning.
 6. Structural/EMS coats and pants that have become heavily soiled should be cleaned using a small amount of mild detergent in a bucket of water and a soft brush and scheduled by email and phone as soon as possible to be sent to the fire department Shop for cleaning.
 - a. The protective clothing should be then left to air dry. DO NOT dry in direct sunlight.
- B. Helmets, including eye shields, should be kept clean and free of a buildup of particulate matter using a detergent or mild abrasive cleaner.
- C. No unauthorized repairs will be made to any protective equipment item. All repair and cleaning needs shall be communicated in advance to the Shop via email **and** phone.
- D. Personnel will be responsible for the care and maintenance of their issued gear. PPE is to be kept free of tears, rips, and will be kept in a clean condition.
- E. DO NOT use cleaning products containing bleach on any protective clothing, including hoods.
- F. PPE will not be stored in the living areas of the station due to the possibility of soiled and contaminated material being transferred from the PPE to the living area

of the station. (i.e. boots and pants stored on the engine room floor and not in the dormitory).

- G. In the event the gear becomes contaminated with any potentially harmful substance, the gear shall *immediately* be removed from service, sealed in a yellow bag, marked appropriately with a structural gear tag, and sent in to Shop and Supply to be decontaminated properly. Protective gear contaminated with bodily fluids shall be placed in a yellow bag with a structural gear cleaning tag attached and sent to the fire department Shop and Supply for cleaning. Without the structural gear tag, Shop personnel will not be aware of the specific issue or know to whom the gear is assigned. For safety of the Shop personnel, please be very clear as to what type of contamination has occurred and notify them via email and phone prior to sending the contaminated gear. Loaner gear will be issued as necessary.
 1. It is recommended that the cleaning of the hoods be done through the Shop. However, when additional cleaning is necessary, the manufacturer does accept the hoods to be machine washed in a normal cycle, in hot water, with mild detergent and double rinsed. The hood can then be air dried in a flat position.
 2. DO NOT DRY IN DIRECT SUNLIGHT AND DO NOT WASH WITH PERSONAL LAUNDRY (i.e. sheets, towels, clothes).

VII. Inspection and Commercial Cleaning

A. Inspection:

1. Daily – All members are responsible to inspect issued PPE and report any adverse findings to their company officer.
2. Monthly – *Company Officers* will inspect and make recommendations to the Safety & Training Division for replacement or repair.
 - a. Cleaning needs should be forwarded to the respective District Chief.
3. Annually – Company Training to include:
 - a. Fit test of structural gear
 - b. Inspection of structural gear
 - c. Donning personal protection equipment in a timely manner

B. Commercial Cleaning:

1. Semi-annually, Shop will schedule commercial cleaning of structural gear.
 - a. Shop personnel will schedule PPE cleaning according to the PPE Software cleaning schedule, with no more than eight sets of gear per shift.
 - i. All equipment shall be properly marked with the employee's name. All liners shall be removed from coats and pants, and the liners shall be turned inside out by the individual, before sending to shop. All pockets shall be emptied, and all accessories (belt, D-rings, etc.) shall be removed. Station Captains will designate a pick-up and delivery location. Bloodborne pathogen contamination is to be placed in a yellow bag, and the structural gear tag marked accordingly to reflect the gear has been contaminated with bloodborne pathogens.
 - b. **Structural Gear Tags** will be filled out completely.
 - i. These tags will be used to assist in documenting and delivery of

cleaned structural gear. Tags must include the following information: date, name, date back to work, and return to fire station number.

2. The Shop will process pick-up and delivery utilizing afternoon deliveries when necessary. Note: the normal mail run will only be completed on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Shop will make special trips for gear cleaning as necessary, but this must be communicated to shop personnel via email and phone prior to sending gear in.
 - a. Structural gear tags will be used to document pick-up and cleaning of structural gear on a daily basis.
 - b. Contact the fire department shop for additional structural gear tags.
 - c. PPE Software will be updated to reflect all cleaning and repair activity.
- C. **Loaner Gear** will be available for emergency situations and delivery delays.
1. Contact the Shop Monday through Friday or contact the DC after normal hours to receive loaner gear.
 2. **Friday R-day** personnel may experience possible delivery delays.
- D. **Personal Protection:** All personnel should consider Personal Protective Equipment while inspecting/cleaning their structural firefighting gear as well as any time the structural gear is being assembled/disassembled. These precautions should include at a minimum: Eye Protection, HEPA Mask, and disposable gloves. Personnel are also highly encouraged to wash their hands before/after handling any structural firefighting gear.
- VIII. Additional cleaning will occur with the approval of the Company Officer. Personnel must notify the Shop via email and phone when additional cleaning is necessary and meets company officer approval, to make shop personnel aware the PPE needs to be picked up. Additional cleaning due to contamination shall be done on an immediate need basis. Additional cleaning due to general wear, odor, or other non-critical issue will be scheduled within the individual's R-Day period, when possible.
- IX. Each ALS unit is equipped with four communicable disease protection kits which include gown, gloves, masks, and eye protection. In order to ensure maximum protection and reduce liability, the following policy is in effect.
- A. The minimum protection that shall be worn on any EMS call regardless of the presence of known disease is as follows:
 1. Latex gloves on all calls
 - a. Gloves will be donned prior to patient contact.
 2. Firefighting gloves in any situation where sharp or rough edges might be present (i.e.: extrication)
 3. Protective eye wear
 - B. N95 or P100 masks will be worn anytime there is a potential for airborne contaminants
 - C. When a patient's specific condition could reasonably lead to the spread of a known communicable disease, all personnel who will make contact with the patient in any manner will don the complete kit of protective equipment prior to making contact.
 1. All protective kits must be fully stocked at all times and should be checked daily (except those in a sealed compartment).