

POLICY: PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Hadley Township Fire Department
Policy #103

I. PURPOSE

To assure that all personnel are prepared to commence fire suppression or rescue operations at an emergency scene or training exercise while maintaining the highest degree of personal safety for all personnel.

II. SCOPE

This guideline applies to all personnel engaged in training or emergency operations. This guideline supercedes all previous documents concerning the same subject matter and becomes effective immediately.

It shall be the policy of this department that all personnel, when responding to fire suppression or rescue operations, or during training exercises, be properly protected by wearing protective equipment as designated by this policy. Specific situations may require additional protective equipment as directed by the Incident Commander.

III. GENERAL

A. Full Protective Equipment

1. For the purpose of this guideline full protective equipment will consist of the following:
 - a. Helmet with face shield
 - b. Sock hood
 - c. Turnout coat
 - d. Turnout pants
 - e. Boots
 - f. Gloves
2. All equipment is to be worn properly fastened and closed with sock hood on, coat collar turned up and helmet earflaps down. All equipment is to be used in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.
3. All equipment shall be issued or approved by the Fire Department. Removal of original liners is prohibited. The Fire Chief or his/her designee must first approve any alterations to equipment.

B. Application

1. Under no circumstance shall any aspect of personal safety be sacrificed in order to increase the speed of emergency operations. Emergency operations shall not commence until all involved personnel have donned necessary protective equipment.
2. All firefighting personnel shall wear appropriate protective equipment when performing emergency operations. All protective equipment required shall be donned upon arrival and prior to entering the incident perimeter.
3. The minimum protective equipment for any emergency incident is helmet, boots and turnout pants. This equipment will be donned immediately upon arrival at any incident scene. Minimum required protective equipment for specific incident types is as follows:
 - a. Structure fires - Full protective equipment
 - 1) Pump Operators - Helmet, boots and turnout pants

- b. Vehicle fires - Full protective equipment
 - 1) Pump Operators - Helmet, boots and turnout pants
 - c. Hazardous materials incidents - Full protective equipment
 - d. Vegetative cover fires - Boots and turnout pants or departmentally approved coveralls and heavy work boots. Helmet is required if operating near vegetation or trees taller than shoulder height.
 - e. Automobile accidents
 - 1) Wash down, extrication, - Full protective equipment
Vehicle stabilization, battery disconnection, glass removal, etc.
 - 2) Patient handling outside vehicle - Helmet, boots and pants
 - f. Traffic control - Helmet, boots and turnout pants or Helmet and departmentally approved reflective safety vest.
- 4. The minimum protective equipment required will be increased as necessary to ensure safety at a particular incident.
 - 5. The incident commander will determine if and when any of the minimum equipment may be removed during the incident.

C. Additional Protective Equipment

- 1. Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) shall be worn and utilized at all times by any personnel working in areas where:
 - a. The atmosphere is hazardous.
 - b. The atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous.
 - c. The atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous.
- 2. Firefighters engaged in the attack of a structure fire shall wear a SCBA in addition to full protective equipment.
- 3. Firefighters engaged in the attack of a vehicle fire shall wear a SCBA in addition to full protective equipment.
- 4. All personnel involved in overhaul will wear a self-contained breathing apparatus and fully protective gear until the Incident Commander deems the environment safe.
- 5. All personnel working below ground level or inside any confined space shall use SCBA unless the safety of the atmosphere can be established by testing and continuous monitoring.
- 6. All personnel operating power tools, hydraulic tools or forcible entry tools shall wear full Protective equipment. Full protective equipment is also required for all personnel in an area where any of these tools are being operated.
- 7. All personnel operating at incidents where there is a possibility that tools, equipment, shall wear helmets with chinstrap in place or debris from above may fall. This would include any time personnel are operating above or below grade such as during trench rescue or high angle rope rescue situations.
- 8. Damage to personal protective equipment shall be immediately reported to the Safety Officer. The Safety Officer shall inspect the damaged article and order it replaced or repaired.

Equipment damaged such that its protective ability is impaired shall not be used.

9. Incident commanders may use their discretion to determine the appropriate level of protective equipment required for personnel operating at incidents where no specific guidelines have been established. In all cases, personnel shall be required to wear all protective equipment necessary to protect against all foreseeable hazards.

D. Blood Borne Pathogens and Patient Handling

1. Personnel who provide patient care or are likely to be exposed to blood or body fluids shall be provided protective emergency medical equipment including face protection, and gloves that meet NFPA standards.
2. All personnel shall wear gloves when in contact or in a area of likely contact with a patient or body fluids. Patient care shall not begin until gloves are in place.
3. Personnel shall don face protection and gloves prior to administering patient care where discharges of large amounts of bodily fluids are likely.
4. Gloves and other protective devices shall be disposed of after use. At multi casualty incidents gloves shall be changed between patients if possible.
5. Contaminated gloves, etc. shall be placed in a red biohazard bags and disposed of at the hospital or with the ambulance service.
6. Contaminated non-disposable equipment shall be cleaned decontaminated as soon as possible. Decontamination shall always take place before the item is placed back in service.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. It shall be the responsibility of each fire department member to fully comply with the provisions of this standard.
- B. Officers shall be responsible for their crews and ensure they are not exposed to any unnecessary risk.