

POLICY: Care for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Hadley Township Fire Department
Policy #119

I. PURPOSE

- A. The environment in which firefighters perform their duties demands that they be provided with the best personal protective equipment available. The provision and use of quality protective equipment will not by themselves, assure the greatest firefighter safety. All protective equipment has inherent limitations that must be recognized so that firefighters will not overextend the item's range of protection.
- B. The purpose for this BPG is to establish and maintain a policy and guideline for the use and care of protective clothing by the members of the HFD. This BPG applies to all personnel of the HFD. It shall be the guideline of the HFD to utilize the following BPG as outlined. It shall also be the guideline of the department to evaluate the effectiveness of the BPG and make adjustments as needed.

II. OPERATIONAL PROTOCOL

- A. All members of the Department are issued personnel protective equipment that meets or exceeds the requirement of NFPA and MIOSHA. All protective clothing shall be of a type and kind issued or approved by the Fire Chief. Non approved items shall not be worn. This gear is only as effective as the members make it. This gear must be worn as outlined in this guideline.
- B. Approved equipment includes but is not limited to the following items:
 - 1. Turnout coat and pants, gloves, helmet, hood, boots, jumpsuits
 - 2. SCOTT or ISI face piece
 - 3. Station/work uniforms
- C. SCBA, ***although not issued***, shall also be included in this procedure as far a use, care, and maintenance.
- D. All firefighters at the scene of a fire or incident, when in close proximity to the structure, vehicle or dumpster, shall wear full firefighting gear, including at a minimum turnout coat, bunker pants, boots, helmet and gloves. The SCBA should be donned and in the ready to use position.
- E. Members operating within the structure, vehicle, dumpster or other unknown hazard shall have the face piece donned, SCBA on. The SCBA face piece shall not be removed until the firefighter is outside the structure or until it is determined that no respiratory hazards are present.
- F. Protective clothing and SCBA must be worn whenever the member is at risk of being exposed to an unknown hazard or before it can be determined what the hazard present may be at the time.
- G. The member must use the protective clothing and SCBA if it is determined that a hazard is present and use the protection level appropriate for the incident.
- H. Members of the department must wear additional or alternative protective clothing deemed appropriate for the situation while involved in at an incident. This may require the member to wear more than the protective clothing mentioned in this procedure.

- I. When inspecting any protective clothing any time a defect is noticed that will effect the use of the equipment it must be placed out of service until it is determined that the equipment posses no problem or a repair has been made using manufacturers guidelines. The Assistant Chief or his designee is to be notified of the defect and that replacements are needed.

- K. PPE

- 1. PPE for structural firefighting will consist of, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Turnout Coat
 - b. Bunker Pants
 - c. Suspenders
 - d. Boots
 - e. Gloves
 - f. Helmet
 - g. Nomex Hood
 - h. SCOTT/ISI Mask
 - i. Wildland jumpsuits

- 2. Protective clothing will be kept free of all foreign material.

- 3. Cleaning will be done in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Procedures in Letter N will be used.

- L. Wearing of Personal Protective Equipment

- 1. PPE must be worn at all times during response to the scene of any emergency situation, special situations call for specific PPE such as Ice/Water Rescue, or Wildland fires.
 - 2. The Incident Commander or designee must be accountable for any donning of PPE contrary to this SOG, making acceptable exceptions at his/her discretion.
 - 3. PPE may be removed at the discretion of the Incident Commander or designee.
 - 4. Driver/Engineer must wear either wildland jumpsuit and boots or bunker pants and boots when responding to an emergency incident. Upon arriving at the incident, driver/engineer must don remaining PPE or as designated by the chief.

- M. Inspection and Maintenance

- 1. All members of the department must receive annual training on PPE. During the training the member will be given specific instructions on the use, care and maintenance of the equipment.
 - 2. Prior to the use and **after each use** the PPE must be visually inspected for cuts, holes, tears or any other noticeable defect in the material of the garment.
 - 3. Once a garment has a defect it must be repaired by the manufacturer or a representative of the manufacturer or replaced.
 - 4. Firefighters will inspect protective equipment. All protective equipment must be inspected a minimum of every six (6) months or after every use.

5. Helmets

- a. After each use the helmet shall be inspected. During this time the member shall look at the strap to make sure the buckles are not damaged and the strap is in proper working order.
- b. The face shield shall be inspected for scratches cracks and visibility.
- c. Inspect the outer shell for any cracks both inside and outside.
- d. The reflective trim shall be inspected.
- e. The inside shall be inspected to make sure the ear flap protection is in proper working order and that the impact ring is still in place.
- f. The helmet should be checked for any defect and signs of heat damage. Any defect found shall be repaired by either replacing the defective part or by sending the helmet out for repair by the manufacturer.

N. Cleaning of PPE

1. Cleaning must be done as necessary and at least biannually. ***Any heavily soiled area must be treated and if needed the garment or equipment must be washed.***
2. In the event that the garment or equipment has been exposed to any hazardous materials known or unknown the garment must be taken to a facility designated to handle such contaminated gear. This must also apply to station uniforms and medical equipment contaminated with blood or other pathogen. In the event that this situation does occur the Incident Commander or designee as well as the Fire Chief must be notified of the situation and an exposure form must be filled out by the person wearing the gear.
3. The following procedures are to be applied to the washing of the protective coat and pants as well as the inner liner and outer shells, Nomex hoods and station uniforms.
 - a. Use hot water.
 - b. Use the highest water level.
 - c. The garment shall be added to the washer. Only Nomex items shall be washed together.
 - d. Use a normal cycle, cotton/white or similar setting.
 - e. Use a double rinse cycle. This may require the person to run the washer through a second rinse cycle ***without adding detergent.***
 - f. Run the washer machine empty with detergent to purge any residue.
 - g. Do not use chlorine bleach.
 - h. Do not dry clean.
4. Turnout gear is to be washed utilizing the following recommended bleach substitutes, or other substitutes approved by the Fire Chief. Follow the direction printed on the product being used.
 - (1) Liquid Cloro x 2
 - (2) Liquid Vivid

5. The following are recommended for the purpose of spot cleaning and pre-treating protective equipment. Follow the direction on the product being used.

- a. Liquid Spray and Wash
- b. Liquid Shout
- c. Liquid Tide
- d. Liquid Dishwasher Detergent

6. Helmet Cleaning

Wipe clean with mild soap and water and sponge. Do not use any other detergent or astringent unless approved by the Fire Chief. Face shield shall be cleaned in the same manner.

7. Gloves

- a. Gloves shall be inspected after each use. Inspect for cuts, tears, holes or any other defect in the material.
- b. The gloves shall also be check for dirt and other contaminants.
- c. Gloves shall be cleaned in warm water using a mild detergent. The preferred method is to hand wash the gloves. This can be done by placing the gloves on the hands and rubbing them together or by using a brush to clean them of any dirt or contaminates.
- d. As with other Protective Equipment do not use chlorine bleach or other products that contain chlorine.

8. Boots Inspection

- a. Leather boots shall be inspected after use for tread wear. Any cracks in the uppers section of the boot.
- b. Inspection shall also be made for dirt, leaks in the boot, abrasions and cuts.
- c. Cleaning must be done with a mild soap and water. The surface must be cleaned with saddle soap. Then polished with a nonflammable shoe polish.
- d. Rubber boots must be inspected after use for dirt, dust, chemicals, and also for leaks, cuts abrasions and tread wear.
- e. Cleaning must be done with mild soap and water.

9. Air Mask

- a. All operations conducted with respiratory protection shall be in accordance with the HFD SCBA SOG, Policy #010.

10. Cleaning Log

- a. All Cleaning must be logged on a HFD approved gear wash form.