

Bethel Township Fire Department

GENERAL ORDER: 300	SECTION: PPE/Uniform
SUBJECT: Protective Clothing	EFFECTS: All Personnel
ADOPTED: 05/01/2016	SUPERSEDES: All Previous
REVISED:	

PURPOSE:

- A. To establish protective clothing guidelines for all personnel
- B. To help protect personnel by establishing guidelines for the issue, use, and care of department issued protective clothing.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH)** - an atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.

GENERAL ORDER:

The Bethel Township Fire Department will issue to each firefighter, protective clothing of modern design to help protect each member from injury during normal firefighting operations. It is necessary for each member to wear the issued protective clothing properly to be adequately protected; therefore, this procedure shall serve as the standard as to when and where such protection is required. EMS personnel may be issued protective clothing based upon availability.

A. WEAR AND USE OF PROTECTIVE CLOTHING:

Full protective clothing shall be defined as the following items:

- Helmet with goggles, face shield or safety glasses
- Bunker Coat with appropriate liner
- Bunker Pants with appropriate liner and suspenders
- Firefighting boots
- Firefighting gloves
- Firefighting hood (Nomex, PBI, etc.)

Only protective clothing issued by the Bethel Township Fire Department is to be worn, unless approved by the fire chief. Every effort shall be made for protective clothing to meet the appropriate NFPA guidelines. Any member wearing his/her own equipment is responsible for the maintenance and/or upkeep of that equipment. The member will not be issued a duplicate set of equipment by the fire department (example: A firefighter using his/her own leather fire boots would not be issued a pair from the fire department.). Personnel are not permitted to wear department issued equipment other than for Bethel Township Fire Department operations except with permission of the Fire Chief. Issued Personal Protective equipment is not to be taken from the station without prior approval from a Chief Officer.

Any personnel entering a hazardous atmosphere shall wear at a minimum all of the above items. Incidents that will require full protective clothing shall include but is not limited to:

- Structure Fires
- Vehicle Fires
- Grass/Brush Fires
- WMD Incidents
- Motor Vehicle Crashes
- Fire Alarms
- Odor Investigations
- Any other incident deemed necessary by the Fire Chief or IC

Protective clothing must be worn appropriately to provide adequate protection. When entering an IDLH atmosphere the following shall be completed:

- Coat throat tab shall be closed
- Coat collar is to be worn up
- Chinstrap shall be fastened and pulled snug to the chin
- Earflaps on the helmet shall be down
- Firefighting gloves shall be worn
- Firefighting hood shall be worn
- Safety Vest (An ANSI Class 2 or 3 retro-reflective safety vest is required for all fire department personnel working on or adjacent to the roadway, including paved shoulder or the highway right of way, regardless of the distance.)

Protective clothing shall be worn at all times while on the emergency scene until the IC or appropriate officer determines it is safe to remove any part of the protective envelope. Helmets shall be worn at all times in or near the structure, emergency area, or when operating near moving vehicles, such as near a roadway when falling or flying debris might be a hazard. Gloves and helmets shall be worn at a minimum when training with hose, hose testing, using tools or ladders, or any other situations where hand and head injuries are likely to occur.

All Personnel that are issued turnout gear are required to keep it with them while on duty. This shall include EMS responses in the medic, engine and/or staff vehicle. All personnel shall don appropriate protective clothing prior to the vehicle moving. The only exception is the vehicle operator may elect to wait until they arrive on the scene and finish dressing after arriving on the scene.

B. CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE OF TURNOUT GEAR

Protective clothing shall be cleaned appropriately for the following situations:

- Within 24 hours after any fire, drill, or situation in which the garments have come in contact with the products of combustion.
- Immediately following any entry into a "warm" or "hot" Haz-Mat zone.
- Immediately following vehicle accidents when garments come into contact with and/or are contaminated by gasoline, oil, diesel fuel, anti-freeze, etc.
- Immediately following EMS response when protective clothing is contaminated with any Bloodborne pathogen.
- Other situations may include after many hours of use, where as, the inner liner may need to be deodorized or outer shells have been exposed to adverse weather for long periods of time.
- Semi-annually if none of the above criteria are met.

Protective clothing shall be cleaned using the following procedure:

- Protective clothing shall be washed separately from other garments
- Protective clothing shall be washed, using the cold setting.
- Separate the liners from the outer shells. **LINERS AND SHELLS SHALL BE WASHED SEPARATELY.**
- **DO NOT OVERLOAD THE WASHER!** Up to 1 set of outer shell or liner (1 pant and 1 coat) may be washed at a time. Do not mix liners with outer shells.
- Hang the garments in a warm dry place. **DO NOT DRY OUTER SHELLS OR LINERS IN A MECHANICAL DRYER.**
- Firefighting gloves can be washed with outer shells in the same wash cycle.
- Firefighting hoods can be washed with inner liners.
- Helmets shall be cleaned with a mild detergent and warm water or a non-abrasive all-purpose plastic cleaner. Foaming cleaner is also acceptable.

The fire department has invested a great deal of money in its employee's protective clothing and safety. The following are simple safety rules that shall be abided by all employees that are issued protective clothing.

- Protective clothing shall not be cleaned with, dried near, or stored near bleach or any other products that contain chlorine.

- Protective clothing shall not be dry cleaned.
- Do NOT use fabric softeners on protective clothing.
- DO NOT use mechanical devices and/or electrical clothes dryers to dry protective clothing. Cool air fans may be used to speed up the drying process.
- Protective clothing shall not be dried or left in direct sunlight (including the bay floor, cars, etc...). The UV rays will break down the garments after prolonged exposure.
- Defects, deficiencies, or repairs needed in the protective clothing shall be reported immediately to the supervisor responsible for protective clothing

Failure to comply with this standard operating guideline could result in damage to the garments, injury and/or death to the employee.