



Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

**For the Care and Maintenance of Protective
Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting**

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Section 1: Administration

1. Purpose

The purpose of these Standard Operating Procedures is to establish a program for structural fire fighting protective coats, pants, hoods, helmets, gloves and boots to reduce the safety and health risks associated with these items when they are poorly maintained, contaminated or damaged.

2. Scope

This document complies with NFPA 1851 Standard on Selection, Care and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting, 2014 Edition AND Maintenance and Remediation of Toxic Substances on Turnout Gear in compliance with CT Public Act 22-139. An act concerning adoption of the recommendations of the Task Force to study cancer relief benefits for firefighters

This document describes the program parts, establishes program procedures and assigns roles and responsibilities to all members of the Norfolk Vol. Fire Department for implementing and maintaining the program.

It is the objective of the program to set requirements for the proper handling, care, maintenance and retirement of protective ensembles.

Section 2: Program

1. Program Parts

The program consists of the following parts:

- The compilation and maintenance of records
- Protecting the public and personnel from contamination
- Inspection for soiling, contamination and damage
- Cleaning and decontamination
- Repairing damaged ensembles
- Retirement, disposition and special incident procedure

Norfolk Fire Dept. has designated personnel who have been trained to provide in-house Cleaning and Decontamination (reference Section 4.1 through 4.4)

2. Records

Records will be kept for all structural fire fighting protective equipment in use. This includes all protective coats, pants, hoods, helmets, gloves and boots permanently assigned to personnel, as well as items available for temporary use.

Trained person(s) responsible for maintenance will record on cleaning record sheet:

- Dates(s) and findings of advanced cleaning or decontamination
- Name of person gear is assigned to

3. Manufacturer's Instructions

Manufacturer Care and Use Manuals are attached to all new NFPA 1971 compliant structural fire fighting protective equipment. When issuing new protective equipment, The Chief will provide the member to whom they have been issued with the Care and Use Manual.

It is the responsibility of the member to read Manufacturer Care and Use Manuals.

Manufacturer care and maintenance instructions must be followed.

4. Protecting the Public and Personnel from Contamination

Structural fire fighting protective equipment that has been determined to be soiled or contaminated must be cleaned or decontaminated following any firefighting activities. Gross decontamination on scene of an incident followed by inspection and proper cleaning once back at the station.

Structural fire fighting protective equipment must not be taken home, washed at home or washed in public laundries.

The public must not be exposed to potentially soiled or contaminated structural fire fighting protective equipment except during emergency operations.

Section 3: Inspection

1. General Information

The purpose of inspection is to determine whether personal protective equipment has soiling, contamination or damage that makes it unsafe for use.

When appropriate, universal precautions must be used.

If personal protective equipment is found to be soiled or contaminated, it must be cleaned or decontaminated before further inspection.

2. Routine Inspection

Routine inspection is the responsibility of each member of the Norfolk Vol. Fire Dept. who has been issued personal protective equipment.

Routine inspection must be performed after each use and after each exposure to an event that could result in soiling or damage.

Protective coats and pants should be inspected for the following:

- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage
 - Rips, tears and cuts
 - Damaged or missing hardware and closures
- Damaged or missing trim
- Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches
- Correct assembly of shell, liner and Drag Rescue Device (DRD)

DRDs should be inspected for the following:

- Installation in coat
- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage
 - Cuts, tears, punctures, cracking or splitting
 - Thermal damage
 - Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches

Hoods should be inspected for the following:

- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage
 - Rips, tears and cuts
 - Thermal damage
- Stretching or elongation of the face opening
- Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches

Helmets should be inspected for the following:

- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage to the shell
 - Cracks, crazing, dents and abrasion
 - Thermal damage
- Physical damage to the earflaps
 - Rips, tears and cuts
 - Thermal damage
- Damaged or missing components of the suspension and retention systems
- Damage or missing components of the face shield or goggles
- Damaged or missing reflective trim
- Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches

Gloves should be inspected for the following:

- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage
 - Rips, tears and cuts
 - Thermal damage
 - Inverted liner
- Shrinkage
- Loss of flexibility and/or loss of elasticity of the wristlet
- Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches

Boots should be inspected for the following:

- Soiling
- Contamination
- Physical damage
 - Cuts, tears and punctures
 - Thermal damage
 - Exposed or deformed steel toe, steel midsole or shank
- Loss of water resistance
- Closure damage or not functioning
- Seams becoming un-sewn and missing or broken stitches

Members who suspect that a problem exists should inform the Officer in Charge

Section 4: Cleaning and Decontamination

1. General Information

The purpose of cleaning is to remove substances that could affect the performance of ensembles or personal protective equipment and to remove substances that are potentially hazardous to the user.

2. Routine Cleaning

Routine cleaning is the responsibility of each member of the Norfolk Fire Dept. who has been issued personal protective equipment. It is a light cleaning performed by the member without the elements being taken out of service.

Routine cleaning must be performed after each use and immediately after an emergency response to remove surface contaminants before they set in.

Personal protective equipment should be cleaned as follows:

- Locate and read the manufacturer's label for instructions on cleaning and drying
- Brush off dry debris
- Rinse off other debris with a garden hose
 - High velocity water jets shall not be used
- Gently brush with a soft bristle brush when necessary and rinse again

If the above cleaning procedures have not rendered the element clean enough for service, the element must be taken out of service and subjected to an advanced cleaning.

3. Advanced Cleaning

Advanced cleaning will be conducted at a minimum of every 6 months, or whenever personal protective equipment is soiled to the extent that soil cannot be sufficiently removed by routine cleaning. Advanced cleaning is a thorough cleaning that requires personal protective equipment to be taken out of service.

Advanced cleaning procedures are based on each protective equipment element's manufacturer's care instructions.

The following guidelines should be used by members to determine if personal protective equipment is soiled to the extent that advanced cleaning is necessary:

- Obvious odor that cannot be removed with routine cleaning or indicates contamination (diesel fuel for example)
- Visible soil that cannot be sufficiently removed with routine cleaning
- Known exposure to hazardous chemicals
- Known exposure to bio-hazards

Norfolk Vol Fire Dept. has designated personnel who have been trained to perform advanced cleaning. Annual advanced cleaning will be conducted at the time elements become soiled to the extent that an advanced cleaning is necessary.

Trained person(s) responsible for maintenance will record on Gear Cleaning Sheet:

- Dates(s) and findings of advanced cleaning or decontamination
- Reason for advanced cleaning or decontamination

4. Decontamination

Decontamination is a specialized cleaning of personal protective equipment that is known or suspected to be contaminated with hazardous materials. Personal protective equipment will be evaluated on the scene by the Safety Officer or Other to assess extent of contamination. The Safety Officer or Other will determine whether the elements need to be isolated, tagged and bagged on scene and a contractor contacted for cleaning and inspection.

Section 5: Repairs

Members who suspect that a problem exists should inform the Officer in Charge. The Officer in Charge should contact the department's turnout gear vendor

Section 6: Storage

1. General Information

Proper storage of personal protective equipment extends its life, maintains its performance and reduces potential health risks. Improper storage can result in damage to the ensemble or ensemble element and can compromise the member's safety. Certain conditions can result in deterioration of performance of the ensemble or element or create potential health hazards.

Ultraviolet (UV) light is a known cause of personal protective equipment degradation. Personal protective equipment must never be stored in direct sunlight. They should be stored to minimize exposure to all sources of UV light, including fluorescent light and other UV sources.

Storage of wet or moist personal protective equipment promotes the growth of mildew and bacteria, which can lead to skin irritation or more serious medical conditions and affect the strength of some materials.

Storage in extreme temperatures for prolonged periods of time will accelerate deterioration of ensemble and elements.

Soiled personal protective equipment can present a health risk to individuals who come into contact with it. Therefore, they should not be stored in personal living quarters and passenger compartments of vehicles. Furthermore, to prevent the spread of disease and cross contamination, soiled personal protective equipment should be segregated from other items of equipment.

Storage or transporting in compartments or trunks with sharp objects, tools or other equipment could damage ensembles and ensemble elements.

Storage in contact with hydraulic fluids, solvents, hydrocarbons, hydrocarbon vapors or other contaminants can cause material degradation, transfer toxins to individuals and reduce FR properties of personal protective equipment.

Section 7: Retirement

1. General Information

Norfolk Fire Dept has specific criteria for the permanent removal of personal protective equipment from operational use. Personal protective equipment that is removed from front line service because it is no longer suitable for primary personal protection can be issued to exterior members or drivers.

Appendix A: Gear Cleaning Sheet

NVFD GEAR CLEANING SHEET



Date	Routine Y/N	Name Of Assigned Member	Initials

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