

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- A. The intent of this guideline is to assure proper personnel protection and public recognition of qualified assistance to their emergencies. This guideline is not intended to supersede other PPE requirements.
- B. A member may incur a disciplinary action for not wearing the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) or proper outerwear. Members are expected to be personally responsible to wear the proper PPE for the task being performed following reasonable risk evaluations.
- C. There MAY be instances when members may not have the PPE or PFD outerwear immediately available. It is not the intent of this guideline to address those few incidents, however members are encouraged to have their PPE and PVFD outerwear available at all times. PFD outerwear is NOT considered to be PPE.
- D. All Fire Dispatched Incidents:
 - 1. Full protective clothing, including SCBA, shall be worn at all structure, vehicle and dumpster fires. All personnel riding in PFD vehicles should don the minimum of pants, suspenders and boots prior to boarding the vehicle (except for Squad 60 / District 60). Personnel are encouraged to don the coat prior to boarding.
 - 2. All personnel must remain seat belted at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
 - 3. The vehicle driver is exempt from wearing PPE during the response; however the driver is encouraged to wear a minimum of PPE pants, suspenders and boots. The driver must don pants, boots and helmet as soon as possible after arrival at fires and rescues.
- E. All Other Dispatched Incidents:
 - 1. All personnel must be appropriately attired. This specifically means that PVFD outerwear must be worn. If PFD outerwear is not available at the time of the response, the minimum attire is pants, suspenders and boots.

PPE STORAGE AND CLEANING

A. Purpose:

To establish a guideline for proper storage and care of protective clothing.

B. Scope:

This guideline is for the storage of all protective clothing while not in use and cleaning of clothing after being soiled from firefighting activities.

C. Storage of Equipment

1. All protective gear shall be stored in a neat, and orderly fashion as to allow for immediate use when called for an emergency.
2. Those members who respond on apparatus from the stations may hang their gear at the station. Each station has wall provisions to hang coats and helmets, and storage area below for boots and bunker pants. These areas are to be kept neat and orderly.
3. Those members who respond direct to calls shall keep their gear in gear bags. Gear shall be dried completely prior to storing to prevent mold, mildew and dry rot. It is extremely important not to store gear in an area where it will be in direct contact with sunlight. Ultra-violet rays damage the fibers of Nomex and PBI materials and destroy the clothing.
4. Storing protective clothing in a vehicle with window tint film is not acceptable; damaging ultra-violet rays pass through the film and will cause damage to the clothing. A cover of some type must be used in this type of storage.

D. Cleaning and Laundry Instructions

All protective clothing shall be properly cleaned and dried after use to prevent build up of contaminants. Contaminants such as carbon penetrate fibers of Nomex and PBI will decrease the flame retardant characteristics of the materials.

1. Helmets: Helmet outer shells shall be cleaned with all-purpose cleaners such as "409" to remove tar, carbon and smoke residue. The outer shell may be waxed with standard car wax to make future cleaning easier. The inner suspension system shall be cleaned with liquid detergent (Ivory) or clothes washing detergent. Helmet liner shall be thoroughly dried prior to storing.

2. Hoods and Gloves:

- a. Station 1 - Hoods and gloves shall be machine washed on the 29-minute wash cycle, with protective clothing washing detergent. Dry hoods and gloves in machine dryer on low heat.
- b. Station 2 & 3 - Hoods and gloves shall be machine washed in warm water, permanent press cycle with clothes washing detergent. Dry hoods and gloves in machine dryer on permanent press setting.

3. Coats and Pants Outer Shells:

- a. Station 1 - Coats and pants outer shells shall be washed by machine on the 29-minute wash cycle and dried on low heat. The inner liner and outer shell shall be separated when laundered. Outer shells shall be turned inside out, all snaps, hooks, dyes, Velcro fastened, and put into laundry bags prior to placing in machine. This helps to prevent damage to fasteners and the washing equipment. Do not overstuff machine; one set of outer coat shells and inner liners may be put in the machine.
- b. Station 2 & 3 - Coats and pants outer shells shall be washed and dried by machine on permanent press cycles with warm water and warm heat. The inner liner and outer shell shall be separated when laundered. Outer shell shall be turned inside out, all snaps, hooks and dyes and Velcro fastened. This helps to prevent damage to fasteners and the washing equipment. Do not over stuff machine; one outer coat shell and one outer pant shell may be washed together, leaving inner liner for a second load.

4. Coat and pant inner liners:

- a. Station 1 - Coat and pant inner liners shall be washed by machine on the 29-minute wash cycle and dried on low heat. After removing from the outer shell turn the liner inside out prior to placing in machine. If inner liners are not soiled but are wet they can be dried only. Place the liners in the dryer along with a fabric softener sheet to provide a clean, fresh scent.
- b. Station 2 & 3 - Coat and pant inner liners shall be washed and dried by machine on permanent press cycles with warm water and warm heat. After removing from the outer shell turn the liner inside out prior to placing in machine. If inner liners are not soiled but are wet they can be dried only. Place the liners in the dryer along with a fabric softener sheet to provide a clean, fresh scent.

E. Laundry Detergent

PVFD provided protective clothing detergent, or any commercial nonphosphorous detergent shall be used. One scoop (approximately 10 oz.) of commercial liquid or powder detergent will wash a complete load. Approximately 3 oz. of protective clothing detergent will wash a complete load. **NEVER USE BLEACH.** Bleach destroys fibers of Nomex and PBI and shall not be used.

F. Care and Cleaning of Washer and Dryer

Members are allowed to use PVFD owned washing equipment but are required to maintain such equipment. Keep exterior areas clean of dirt and spilled detergent. **ALWAYS CLEAN LINT SCREEN.**

G. Repairs of Protective Clothing

Any rips, burn holes or damage to protective clothing shall be reported immediately to the department quartermaster. PVFD has equipment in house to make most repairs to protective clothing. If damage is not repairable in house, it will be sent for repair.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING ISSUED TO YOU IS FOR YOUR PROTECTION. THIS EQUIPMENT IS EXPENSIVE BUT IS ALSO OF GREAT VALUE IN PROTECTING YOUR LIFE. FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, TAKE THE TIME TO CLEAN, PREPARE, AND REPAIR YOUR EQUIPMENT.