



# Clarke County Fire and Rescue

## Standard Operating Guideline

<b>Subject:</b> Protective Clothing & Equipment Program	<b>SOG:</b> 100.10	<b>Page</b> 1 of 3
<b>Category:</b> Personnel – Protective Clothing & Equipment Program	<b>Sub Category:</b> Protective Clothing	
<b>Approved by:</b> Fire and EMS Director, Boyce VFD Chief, Blue Ridge VFD Chief, John H. Enders VFD Chief	<b>Effective Date:</b> 7/1/2017	

### Purpose

To develop, implement, and maintain a protective clothing and protective equipment program and to provide for the periodic inspection and evaluation of all protective clothing to ensure its suitability for continued service. Providing and maintaining safe and effective protective clothing and equipment is a high priority for our system. All employees have a responsibility to ensure that the department issued protective clothing is maintained in a state of good repair.

### Definitions

The following definitions have been adopted for use;

- CCFR – Clarke County Fire and Rescue
- Employee – For the purposes of this guideline an employee is any member career or volunteer that is a member of one the County Fire-Rescue Departments.

### General

All Stations will be provided copies of NFPA 1851, Standards on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Structural Firefighting and Proximity Firefighting Protective Ensembles. Also provided will be manufactures acceptable inspection guidelines.

1. Turnout gear is to be inspected monthly by the employee, semi-annually by the supervisor and after any incident in which the gear was exposed to hazardous conditions.
2. Monthly inspections will be completed by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. If an employee is unavailable due to vacation, sickness, or other absence from work, then inspections will be completed by the end of the first shift returned to work.
3. Turnout gear to be inspected includes: Helmet, Protective hood, Turnout Coat, Turnout Pants, Fire Gloves, Fire Boots, SCBA face piece, and eye protection.
4. All files shall be maintained at their respective stations and remain accessible to all supervisory employees. Career personnel will turn in all copies to the Clarke County Department of Fire, EMS and Emergency Management office every six months.

5. Turnout gear will be cleaned and repaired in accordance with manufacturer specifications and requirements.
6. If a piece of equipment upon inspection fails to meet minimum safety requirements, the officer in charge or senior employee will make the necessary notifications to have the item(s) replaced immediately.
7. If personal protective equipment is damaged during an actual emergency, supervisory personnel shall be notified immediately to secure replacement items.
8. Advanced inspections of all PPE shall be conducted at least once every 12 months, or whenever routine inspections indicate that a problem may exist. The advanced inspections shall be conducted by members who have received specialized training in the inspection of structural firefighting protective clothing and equipment.

## Procedures

1. **Helmet** – Inspect all components, shell, suspensions, headband, sweatbands, and any accessories for signs of cracks, holes, weakened materials and burns or charring. Inspect the reflective trim for reflectiveness and heat/burn damage.
2. **Protective Hood** – Inspect for tears, holes, burns and fraying. Check for elasticity and proper fit.
3. **Gloves** – Inspect for frays, holes and tears. Inspect for moisture barrier delaminating/separation. Check for proper fit.
4. **Boots** – Inspect leather exterior for contamination, tears, holes, fraying, weakened materials and burns or charring. Inspect inner liner for thermal damage and moisture barrier separation. Check for proper fit.
5. **Turnout Coat** – Inspect outer shell for contamination, tears, holes, fraying, burns or charring. Inspect inner liner for thermal damage, moisture barrier separation, tears, holes and fraying. Inspect hardware (snaps, zippers, Velcro) for functionality. Inspect reflective trim for thermal damage, tears, holes and visibility. Check for proper fit.
6. **Turnout Pants** – Inspect outer shell for contamination, tears, holes, fraying, weakened materials and burns or charring. Inspect inner lining for thermal damage, moisture barrier separation, tears, holes and fraying. Inspect hardware (snaps, zippers, Velcro) for functionality. Check for proper fit.
7. The PPE Equipment Checklist Log is attached to this guideline.

## Cleaning

1. **Advanced Cleaning** – Thorough cleaning of PPE ensembles or elements by washing with clean agents. Advanced cleaning usually requires elements to be taken out of service temporarily. (Example; hand washing, machine washing, and contract cleaning).
2. **Routine Cleaning** – The light cleaning of PPE ensembles and elements performed without taking the elements out of service. (Examples; brushing off dry debris, rinsing with garden hose, and spot cleaning).
3. **Specialized Cleaning** – Cleaning to remove hazardous materials or biological agents. This level of cleaning requires specific procedures and specialized cleaning agents and processes.
4. Soiled or contaminated equipment shall not be brought into the home or living quarters of any fire station. PPE should not be cleaned in public laundromats.
5. Commercial dry cleaning should not be used as a means of cleaning or decontaminating ensembles and equipment.
6. When contract cleaning or decontamination is used, the contract cleaner shall demonstrate, to the organization's satisfaction, procedures for cleaning and decontamination that do not compromise the performance of the PPE.
7. Chlorine bleach or chlorinated solvents should not be used to clean or decontaminate.
8. Cleaning or decontamination solution shall not be greater than pH 10.5.
9. Heavy scrubbing or high velocity power washers shall not be used.

10. Organizations shall consult manufacturer for drying instructions. In the absence of manufacturer's instructions, PPE shall be placed in an area with good ventilation, out of direct sunlight and allowed to air dry.
11. PPE that is in need of repair will be reported immediately to the supervisor. PPE will then be returned to a certified vendor for repair. Under **NO** circumstances will any employee or member attempt to repair their own PPE.

## **Injury Investigations**

1. Personal protective equipment maybe quarantine as a result of sustaining injury while engaged in fire or rescue activities. A determination will be made based on the severity of the injury or if recommended by the investigative team.
2. Gear reclamation should be performed by the on-scene incident commander or his/her designate. Gear involved in open investigation should be indexed and maintained in a secure environment so as to not destroy any potential evidence.
3. Although there is a need to limit the number of individuals who handle an injured person(s) gear, this confiscation of gear should not impede any law enforcement investigation(s).
4. Articles of clothing confiscated for investigative reason(s) will **NOT** be returned to user(s) until a full investigation has been completed and reports submitted to the proper personnel.
5. In the event of confiscation temporary or replacement gear will be issued to any employee fit for active duty.