

Safety Ensemble Inspection & Cleaning Program

CHAPTER 7.7

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Approved by: Chief of Fire Rescue

Purpose:

To inform employees of the proper cleaning and inspection procedures of their PPE.

To reduce the potential for secondary exposure to the products of combustion.

All members are issued one complete set of PPE, no employee shall have “backup” gear.

General Policy

Bunker gear shall be kept clean and in serviceable condition at all times. Gear shall be inspected at the beginning of each shift and after each use to assure it is in good condition. Any issues should be reported to the bunker gear team and District Chief.

Helmets – The department has approved the use of traditional (leather style) and modern helmets. All helmets must meet NFPA standards and be in serviceable condition. Helmet markings shall be in compliance with the following regulations.

- Modern
 - ACFR emblem on the front
 - Rocker on each side identifying rank (Firefighter, Driver Operator, Etc)
 - Surname on rear brim
 - Union sticker (Optional, see CBA)
- Traditional
 - Leather helmet front
 - Design approved by the department including
 - Department name
 - ID number
 - Rank
 - Surname on rear brim
 - Union sticker (Optional, see CBA)

Gloves – Employees may choose to utilize non-department issued fire gloves at their own expense. All fire gloves must meet NFPA standards and be in serviceable condition.

Boots – Employees may choose to utilize non-department issued fire boots at their own expense. All fire boots must meet NFPA standards and be in serviceable condition.

Bunker Gear Storage

All PPE shall be stored in gear lockers in stations where these are available. In other stations and when being transported between work locations efforts shall be made to store Bunker Gear in a dry place and off of the ground. Bunker gear should not be stored in direct sunlight.

Routine Inspection:

Bunker Gear shall be visually inspected each time the assigned wearer arrives for duty and after each use.

- Jacket and Pants (outer shell) - Check for any burns, abrasions, rips, holes, etc. on the outer shell of the gear. Look for any oil, tar or other contaminants. Make sure that all zippers, snap buttons, clips, etc., are working properly and all Velcro closures fasten securely. Velcro should be combed free of lint build up to assure secure closure.
- Jacket and Pants (thermal liner) - To complete a thorough inspection of the thermal liner you should remove the liner from the outer shell. You should check for any burns, deterioration, discoloration, UV damage, holes, rips, etc.
- Helmet – Make sure that web harness and straps are not damaged. Check ratchet, chin strap, shield and shield hardware for any damage. Check the outer shell of the helmet for cracks in the fiberglass or any distortion from heat or mechanical damage.
- Hood – Check hood for any holes, burns, discoloration, rips, excessive stretch, etc.
- Gloves – Check gloves for any holes, burns, rips or worn to leather. Inspect inner liner for continuity & integrity. Gloves should be pliable enough to have a degree of expected dexterity.
- Boots – Check boots for any holes or damage to the steel toe and/or metal plate on the bottom of the boot. Make sure pull straps are fastened to the boot securely. For leather boots check sewn seams. Are boots still waterproof when worn – if not this indicates a violation to the protection. Look for excessive heel wear, which could distort gate and cause a fall.

Advanced Inspection

NFPA 1851 requires an annual advanced inspection of bunker gear by trained individuals. An annual inspection will be conducted department-wide by the bunker gear team.

- All bunker gear items covered under NFPA 1851 must be inspected and documented in the departmental inventory control system (PPE Tracker)

- Helmet
- Hood
- Coat
- Trousers
- Boots
- Gloves
- Items that are personally owned and approved for use on duty must be inspected for condition and suitability for use.
- Any items deemed unfit for use must be removed from service and repaired or replaced

Routine Cleaning

Routine Cleaning is the responsibility of the assigned wearer. Cleaning may consist of:

- A simple brushing of debris. –or-
- Washing off the debris with water hose and soft bristle brush. –or-
- Laundering of the gear in an extractor at Station 60 or Station 24.
- **THE USE OF BLEACH IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**
- Bunker gear is to be washed using the extractors provided in Station 60 and Station 24, residential style washing machines located in the remaining stations shall not be utilized to launder bunker gear.
- Gear shall only be laundered with detergent specifically designed for gear cleaning. Detergent is automatically fed into extractors, therefore no other detergent shall be utilized.
- Instruction on operation of the extractors is available on Target Solutions

This cleaning should commence as soon as possible after contamination. At any time, if your gear is soiled and cannot be cleaned sufficiently by conducting a routine cleaning, you may schedule an advanced cleaning by contacting a bunker team member.

A 3% Hydrogen Peroxide can be used to disinfect small areas of blood or other bodily fluids.

Advanced Cleaning

NFPA 1851 requires an advanced cleaning of bunker gear and ensemble elements on an annual basis. The Bunker Gear Team will conduct annual advanced cleaning in conjunction with advanced inspections. The following procedure shall be followed:

- The off going Company Officer shall ensure that assigned personnel collect their gear, remove all contents from the pockets and separate the liners. Liners shall be turned inside out for cleaning (to prolong life).

- The bunker gear and hood will be placed in plastic bags with the members name written on the outside of the bag. All gear should have the employees name clearly marked on the label, without blocking the serial number or date of manufacture.
- The bunker gear team will coordinate delivery of gear to the nearest inspection and cleaning station.
- All washed gear will be documented appropriately on the Advanced Cleaning Form, for entry into the departmental inventory control system. After gear has been washed, the gear will be delivered back to the originating stations.
- The receiving Company Officer shall ensure that received gear is stored in a manner to facilitate drying. Gear shall not be placed in direct sunlight or dried using residential clothes dryers. Preferably, gear should be placed in a cool, dry, dark location when drying. Placing gear in front of an air circulating fan will expedite the drying process.

The assigned wearer of the gear shall re-assemble his/her gear to return to service.

Helmet – Helmets should be cleaned using soap and water only. Hand wash the inside web harness and straps. Hand wash outer shell if needed. Place in a cool dry area for drying.

Gloves – Hand wash gloves using gear detergent and place in a cool dark area to dry.

Boots – Wash with soap and water, turn boots upside down to dry.

REMEMBER THIS GEAR IS YOUR PROTECTION FROM AN IMMEDIATE THREAT OF A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT, AND IF PROPERLY CARED FOR, IT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE REDUCTION OF POSSIBLE CHRONIC EFFECTS FROM SECONDARY CONTAMINATION.