



B.F.D. Policy Procedure Guideline:	Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment	
PPG # 5-3-1	Effective: 12/01/2020	Supersedes: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE:

To ensure that all fire department personnel are protected from personal injury using the appropriate level of protective clothing.

2.0 SCOPE:

It is the responsibility of all Bristol Fire Department personnel to follow this policy personally and implement it on him or herself. Further, it is the responsibility of each officer to ensure that all firefighters of this fire department or mutual aid departments comply with this PPG when those firefighters are under his/her direction. Authority to deviate rests solely with the Incident Commander who bears full responsibility for any deviation. Under no circumstance will the safety of firefighters be sacrificed to speed up operations.

2.1 The scope of this program includes the selection, use, care, and maintenance of personal protective equipment (e.g. structural firefighting, multi-purpose, special rescue) used by fire department personnel in the performance of their assigned duties and functions. This program has the goal of providing personal protective equipment ensembles that are suitable and appropriate for the intended use; maintaining such protective ensembles in a safe, usable condition to provide the intended protection to the user; removing from use such protective ensembles that could cause or contribute to user injury, illness, or death because of their condition; and reconditioning, repairing, or retiring such protective ensembles.

3.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS:

3.1 Contaminated PPE means its exposure to any:

- Products of combustion
- Infectious substances including blood and body fluids
- Chemicals or other hazardous materials

3.2 Full protective gear for the **Firefighter** function is defined as:

- BFD approved helmet with approved leather shield, chin strap, liner/suspension and eye protection (e.g. Defender Visor and/or NFPA Bourke's or approved safety glasses).
- BFD issued carbon hood (x2).
- BFD issued protective turnout coat.
- BFD issued protective turnout pant with suspenders.
- BFD issued multi-purpose coat or coverall.
- BFD issued multi-purpose pant with suspenders (suspenders optional) or coverall.
- BFD issued structural firefighting gloves
- BFD issued extrication gloves (issued only to vehicle rescue qualified Firefighters).
- BFD issued bunker boots (rubber) or approved bunker boots (leather).
- BFD issued traffic safety vest
- BFD issued flashlight
- BFD issued 25-foot section of 1-inch webbing and locking carabineer.
- SCBA facepiece
- SCBA Twin Cartridge adapter for use with facepiece
- BFD issued cloth face covering



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3.3 Full protective gear for the ***Pumping Apparatus Driver/Operator and/or Exterior Firefighter*** function is defined as:

- BFD approved helmet with approved leather shield, chin strap, liner/suspension and eye protection (e.g. Defender Visor and/or NFPA Bourke's, NFPA goggles or approved safety glasses). Helmets may not be modified or bear any markings, decals, pins, or other decorations without approval from the chief.
- BFD issued multi-purpose coat.
- BFD issued multi-purpose pant with suspenders (suspenders optional).
NOTE: Turnout gear issued to the Apparatus Driver/Operator and Exterior Firefighter function will be kept in serviceable condition however, the NFPA standard life cycle may be waved as these turnout coats/pants will not be worn in an IDLH.
- BFD issued/approved structural firefighting gloves
- BFD issued extrication gloves (issued only to vehicle rescue qualified Firefighters).
- BFD issued bunker boots (rubber) or approved bunker boots (leather).
- BFD issued traffic safety vest
- BFD issued flashlight
- BFD issued cloth face covering

3.4 Rescue Helmets will be issued to personnel based on their function and expected scope of work.

3.5 Forestry Helmets/Gloves are not issued to personnel but available as needed.

3.6 ISP means an independent service provider verified by a third-party certification organization to conduct any one or a combination of advanced inspection, advanced cleaning, basic repair, or advanced repair service.

4.0 REFERENCES:

- 4.1 [B.F.D. Standard Operating Procedures - Care and Maintenance of Protective Gear](#)
- 4.2 NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupations Safety and Health Program
- 4.3 NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting
- 4.4 NFPA 1951, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Technical Rescue Incidents
- 4.5 NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting
- 4.6 NFPA 1977, Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Firefighting

5.0 POLICY

It is the policy of the BFD that:

- 5.1 The BFD will purchase items compliant with NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting.
- 5.2 The BFD will attempt to comply with NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.
- 5.3 The BFD will maintain record of all ensemble items issued.
- 5.4 All fire department personnel will be measured for correct fit prior to issuance of personal protective equipment.



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- 5.5 When issuing new structural firefighting protective ensembles, firefighters will be provided with the instructions provided by the manufacturer on the care, use, and maintenance of the protective ensembles or ensemble elements, including any warnings provided by the manufacturer.
- 5.6 All fire department personnel responding to calls for service will have their boots, pants, and coat on before boarding the apparatus. Pant and coat closures may be secured once on the apparatus. Upon arrival all fire department personnel are to be in a complete form of protection ready to go to work. The incident commander may modify this requirement based on weather conditions and other circumstances.
- 5.6.1 Exception: Pumping/Apparatus Driver Operators may elect to not don his/her protective clothing before responding.
- 5.7 Seat belts or other safety items shall not be removed to facilitate donning of PPE once the vehicle is in motion.
- 5.8 If a piece of apparatus is out of station and personnel are not in full protective clothing and an alarm is received, they will respond to the alarm and then immediately upon arrival don their full protective gear.
- 5.9 At a working fire, apparatus operators adjacent to the hazard zone are to don their protective clothing as soon as practical.
- 5.10 No firefighter or officer will engage in fire suppression, rescue, or hazard control activities unless wearing full protective clothing as described in the following procedure. The use of SCBA is covered in the fire department's Respiratory Protection Program document.
- 5.11 All non-fire department issued protective gear must be approved by the deputy chief before it may be used with the fire department.
- 5.12 Unless prior approval from the chief and/or deputy chief is received, no firefighter may add any accessory or component to any portion of their personal protective ensemble.
- 5.13 All protective gear, fire department issued or personally owned, must meet all applicable NFPA standards.
- 5.14 A periodic inspection of all protective gear will be made by fire department officers to ensure the adequacy of the protective gear to meet applicable safety standards.
- 5.15 All defective, sub-standard, or missing gear will be reported to a firefighters' Division Chief to ensure immediate action is taken to either repair or replace the defective equipment.
- 5.16 All fire department personnel, and any mutual aid personnel working for the town, are to remain in their complete protective gear until the division/group supervisor, with incident command's approval, authorizes a lesser level of personal protective gear.



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- 5.17 Approved extrication gloves may be worn when performing non-fire suppression rescue work.
- 5.18 All protective gear shall receive routine cleaning followed by routine inspection following the use of the protective gear at any incident in which the wearer of the gear entered a hazard zone that contained smoke, fire or other gases or there is visible material such as products of combustion, debris from building materials, or blood or other potential infectious materials.
- 5.19 All protective gear soiled by fire suppression or contaminated with blood or a body fluid shall be cleaned immediately upon completion of the incident. Until the protective gear is cleaned it shall not be worn on a response.
- 5.20 Care and Maintenance:
- 5.20.1 Ensembles shall not be stored in direct sunlight or exposed to direct sunlight while not being worn.
- 5.20.2 Standard precautions shall be observed, as appropriate, when handling contaminated ensemble elements.
- 5.20.3 Contaminated ensembles with hazardous materials or body fluids shall be evaluated on the incident scene and tagged and bagged on scene as needed. Soiled ensembles shall not be stored or transported in the passenger compartment of apparatus or personal vehicles.
- 5.20.4 Before doffing contaminated ensembles gross decon should occur at the scene.
- 5.20.5 Protective ensembles shall not be worn or stored in any area of the fire station except the apparatus bay and turnout gear locker room.
- 5.20.6 The public shall not be exposed at any time, except during emergency operations, to soiled or potentially contaminated protective ensembles or ensemble elements.
- 5.20.7 Any ensemble elements that are found to be soiled or contaminated shall be cleaned or decontaminated before any additional inspection is initiated.
- 5.20.8 Soiled or contaminated ensembles or ensemble elements shall not be brought into the home, washed in home laundries, or washed in public laundries.
- 5.20.9 All repairs to fabric areas shall be performed by a verified ISP.
- 5.20.10 Structural firefighting ensembles, that are assigned to firefighters who's job function requires them to work in an IDLH or potential IDLH, shall be retired when they are more than 10 years old from the date the ensembles or ensemble elements were manufactured or meet any of the following criteria:
- Overall condition of the item is unacceptable.
 - Specific deterioration of materials or components beyond their economic repair.
 - Ability to adequately remove hazardous materials and other contaminants.



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- 5.21 Do not wear any PPE (coat or pant):
- As a duty coat. Wear the issued duty coat.
 - As cold weather attire unless approved by a chief officer
 - In any area of a fire station other than the apparatus bay and turnout gear locker room.
 - While shopping in stores, visiting schools, churches, and public buildings, or performing preplans or inspections
- 5.22 Do not allow the public, especially children during public education events, to don PPE components.
- Helmets are generally too heavy for the underdeveloped skeleton of children not yet in middle school or junior high school. Additionally, these children may transmit lice unknowingly.
 - PPE worn by firefighters may not be free of all contaminants.
 - Use designated pub-ed PPE for these events.

6.0 PROCEDURE

6.1 Use:

- 6.1.1 There is no exact order in which the gear must be donned; this procedure seeks a result of the protective gear being correctly and completely layered.
- 6.1.1.1 Helmet: The helmet is worn atop the head with the ear flaps down, suspension and retention system properly sized per the manufacturer's instructions, and chin strap under the wearers chin tightened per the manufacturer's instructions. No wearer will engage in fire suppression, rescue, or hazard control activities without a complete helmet assembly and wearing his/her chin strap. Helmets should not be worn in the cab of responding apparatus.
- 6.1.1.2 Protective hood: The protective hood will be worn on the firefighter's head when engaged in fire suppression, rescue, or hazard control activities. The base of the hood will be covered by the collar of the Turnout coat. When responding to an alarm the hood should be kept around one's neck ready to be used. When used in conjunction with an SCBA facepiece the hood covers the facepiece straps. When the coat is donned it shall be zipped, velcro secured, and the storm flap secured. Turn-out coats will cover the turn-out pant & suspenders. When preparing to enter a hazard area, whether wearing SCBA or not, the coat collar will be turned up and the throat closure secured across the neck holding both sides of the collar together.
- 6.1.1.3 When the pants are donned the fly closure will be completely fastened and waist strap secured; Suspenders will be used as intended with all turn-out pants. Turn-out coats will cover the turn-out pant, at the waist, & suspenders.
- 6.1.1.4 Boots: Boots will be worn in conjunction with protective turn-out pants and donned at the same time turn-out pants are donned. The turn-out pant cuff and leg, both shell and liner, will cover the boot upper completely.
- 6.1.1.5 Gloves: Gloves must be worn whenever the hand is involved in work in a hazard area. BFD turnout coats are equipped with a thumb catch or wristlet therefore, firefighters shall wear non-gauntlet gloves.



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- 6.1.2 Utilizing the above procedure, a complete set of protective gear donned correctly should provide that:
- 6.1.2.1 The head is covered by the carbon hood with the helmet atop the head with its ear flaps down and chin strap secured;
 - 6.1.2.2 The turn-out pants and boots are on with the pants over the boots, pant fly closed, and suspenders up; and,
 - 6.1.2.3 The turn-out coat is on with both the inside closure and storm flap fully secured, collar up and throat closure across neck, coat overlapping pant waist, and gloves on both hands with gloves covering the thumb catch.

6.2 Inspections

- 6.2.1 See [B.F.D. Standard Operating Procedures - Care and Maintenance of Protective Gear](#)

7.0 GUIDELINES:

- 7.1 As soon as possible smoke, soot, debris, etc. on a firefighter's skin, hands, face, etc. should be removed using available supplies such as wipes, cleaner, and/or soap and water.
- 7.2 In order to reduce possible exposure to contaminants, when possible, firefighters should remove their hoods from around their neck.
- 7.3 All firefighters are issued a second protective hood and should change their hood when it becomes saturated and potentially contaminated.

8.0 APPENDIX:

- 8.1 PPE recommendations

9.0 FORMS: None

