

GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICTS #2 AND #4

SHARED SERVICES PROGRAM JOINT STANDARD OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE

TITLE:	Personal Protective Equipment				NEW	REVISED
					X	
ORDER #:	J.O.G. 23-001	INITIAL ISSUE DATE:	09/01/2023	REVISED ISSUE DATE:		
Approved By Fire District #2: Chief Michael Millisky Chairman George Genzel		Date: 8/17/2023	Approved By Fire District #4: Chief Joseph Cipriano Chairman David Vannoni		Date: 8/17/2023	
POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE:	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	1 YEAR	2 YEARS	OTHER	
			X			
Related Policies	Joint Recommended Post-Fire Decontamination					
Applicable Laws	N/A					
Replaces	Operational Guidelines 7.1, 7.5, 7.11					

Purpose

This standard operational guideline establishes procedures governing the use of personal protective equipment in furtherance of safety and efficiency.

Scope

This policy applies to all fire suppression members of a fire company authorized to operate within the districts, all career firefighters employed by the districts and any other fire suppression personnel approved to temporarily function as a member of a fire company or unit operating under the authority of the districts. All fire suppression personnel including on-scene Incident Commanders, fire officers and acting fire officers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the procedures described in this document. All non-supervisory fire suppression personnel are also responsible to adhere to the procedures described in this policy.

Definitions:

District: Gloucester Township Fire District 2 (GTFD #2) and / or Gloucester Township Fire District 4 (GTFD #4).

EMS: Emergency Medical Services

Member: All elected fire commissioners, all membership classifications within any fire company authorized to operate within the districts as well as all civilian employees and career firefighters employed by the districts and any other fire suppression personnel approved to temporarily function as a member of a fire company or unit operating under the authority of the districts.

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

PPE for Emergency Medical Service Calls: Nitrile Latex Free Protective EMS Gloves, Eye Protection, glasses, goggles, or face shield, splash protection including gowns, respiratory protection face masks or N95 Personal Respirator

PPE for Structural Firefighting: Bunker pants, Turnout Coat, Bunker Boots, Helmet, Firefighting Gloves, Flashover Hood and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Face Piece.

SCBA: Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

Procedure

All Fire Suppression Personnel will utilize Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as prescribed by this policy while operating under the authority of the fire districts. The personal protective equipment will be utilized as directed by the manufacturer in order to ensure that the intended level of protection is achieved i.e. bunker pants and coats will be worn with the liners provided by the manufacturer in place, helmet chin straps shall be firmly secured firmly in place under the firefighter's chin, ear flaps will be pulled down, over the firefighter's ears, when the firefighter is actively involved in or in proximity to operations that necessitate the firefighter to be fully covered by the protective firefighting ensemble for thermal protection.

Protective flashover hoods will also be donned and worn as intended by the manufacturer when a firefighter is actively involved in operations, or whenever a firefighter is in proximity to operations that necessitate the firefighter to be fully covered by the protective firefighting ensemble intended to be provided by his or her structural firefighting PPE i.e. thermal protection during interior firefighting operations.

To ensure a firefighter's hand and wrist areas are protected, turnout coat wristlets and structural firefighting gloves will be utilized whenever actively involved in firefighting operations or whenever in close proximity to the operations.

Extrication gloves may be substituted for firefighting gloves during operations provided that thermal protection is not a primary concern, and the firefighter is not assigned to fire protection duties.

Hearing protection will be utilized during emergency and non-emergency operations, including routine equipment checks or testing of power tools, which results in elevated noise levels when such use will not present a safety hazard. Hearing protection should be used when noise is believed to be at or above 90 decibels.

Hearing protection MAY NOT be worn during any emergency or non-emergency operation when it is determined that such use presents an additional safety hazard.

Eye protection, i.e. safety glasses and / or goggles will be utilized during operations whenever a potential hazard to a firefighter's eyes / vision may exist.

High-Visibility Safety Apparel, i.e., Roadway / Traffic Safety Vests, will be provided for every riding position of all district apparatus and response vehicles All fire suppression personnel, not assigned to primary fire protection duties on a scene, will don the reflective traffic safety vest that is provided for their riding position whenever operating on any roadway.

Fire suppression personnel provided with and trained in the use of GEMTOR Personal Harnesses or other similar safety equipment will maintain the provided safety equipment in ready to use status, integrated into their personal protective equipment. There will be no exchange of harnesses between fire suppression personnel without the approval of a district's Fire Chief or the Chief's designee. Any approved exchanges must be fully documented in writing by the Chief or the Chief's designee.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus will be donned and worn, as intended by the manufacturer, with the firefighter breathing air from the apparatus, when a firefighter is actively involved in operations, or whenever a firefighter is in proximity to operations that necessitate respiratory protection.

Chief and company officers may use discretion in enforcing this guideline when extreme weather or unusual situations exist. Chief and company officers are reminded that they hold the ultimate responsibility for the safety of the members operating under their supervision.

Fire suppression personnel will only utilize district provided and / or approved personal protective equipment.

1. The following is the personal protective equipment to be utilized when members are operating during incidents listed below.

A. Structural, Vehicular, Outdoor and Miscellaneous Fire Suppression - Structural firefighting PPE

B. Technical Rescues Including Structural Collapse, Rope, Trench / Excavation and Confined Space Rescues

1. Structural firefighting PPE
2. In lieu of structural firefighting PPE, personnel may utilize provided Nomex coveralls, steel toe footwear, extrication / work gloves and safety glasses with a structural firefighting helmet or technical rescue helmet.

C. Vehicle and Machinery Rescues

1. Structural firefighting PPE
2. In lieu of structural firefighting PPE, personnel may utilize provided Nomex coveralls, steel toe footwear, extrication / work gloves and safety glasses with a structural firefighting helmet or technical rescue helmet.

D. Surface Ice or Cold-Water Rescue

1. Personnel entering water shall wear cold water entry suits
2. Personnel operating in a hot or warm zone on land shall wear Personal Flotation Device vests or provided Shore Suits
3. Personnel WILL NOT wear structural firefighting personal protective equipment in the Warm or Hot Zone of an Ice, Cold Water or other water related incident.

E. Surface Water or Swift Water Rescues

1. Personnel entering water shall wear dry suits, personal flotation devices with rigging ability, water helmets, water work boots and neoprene water gloves. A strobe light, whistle and Neko Knife shall be installed on the personal floatation devices.
2. Personnel operating in a hot or warm zone on land shall wear Personal Flotation Device vests or provided Shore Suits
3. Personnel WILL NOT wear structural firefighting personal protective equipment in the Warm or Hot Zone of an Ice, Cold Water or other water related incident.

F. Wilderness Search and Rescue

Station uniform, Nomex coveralls if provided, Steel Toe Boots, Extrication/ Work gloves, Safety Glasses, with a structural firefighting helmet or technical rescue helmet.

G. Hazardous Materials Response

Responding personnel will don and utilize the level of personal protective equipment deemed appropriate by command and company officers during an incident. Personal protective equipment may include structural firefighting PPE, Level A Hazardous Materials, PPE ensemble, Level B Hazardous Materials PPE ensemble, Tyvek suit with a self-contained breathing apparatus, Level C Hazardous Materials PPE ensemble, Tyvek suit with respirator or any other level of protection required by a Chemical Haz Com sheet.

H. Emergency Medical Services Responses Involving Patient Care

Fire suppression personnel may respond to EMS calls for service in station uniform. Personnel not in station uniform will wear a minimum of bunker pants and boots. Whenever possible, firefighters should avoid wearing their firefighting PPE when rendering patient care during emergency medical service calls for service. Body substance isolation practices and provided EMS PPE will be utilized to protect against blood borne pathogens while operating during emergency medical services calls involving patient care. Provided N95 or P100 respirators will be utilized whenever the presence of a communicable airborne pathogen is suspected.

I. Emergency Medical Services Assistance Responses i.e., Lift Assists

Fire suppression personnel may respond to EMS calls for service in station uniform. Personnel not in station uniform will wear a minimum of bunker pants and boots. Whenever possible, firefighters should avoid wearing their firefighting PPE when rendering patient care during emergency medical service calls for service. Body substance isolation practices and provided EMS PPE will be utilized to protect against blood borne pathogens while operating during emergency medical services calls for service involving patient care. Provided N95 or P100 respirators will be utilized whenever the presence of a communicable airborne pathogen is suspected.

2. The following is the personal protective equipment to be utilized by apparatus driver operators when they are operating during incidents listed below.

A. Structural, Vehicular, Outdoor and Miscellaneous Fire Suppression

1. Structural firefighting PPE shall be donned as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.
2. Structural firefighting PPE shall be worn as designed by the manufacturer whenever operating at an aerial device turntable.

B. Technical Rescues Including Structural Collapse, Rope, Trench / Excavation and Confined Space Rescues

1. Driver Operators shall don and utilize same the personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

C. Vehicle and Machinery Rescues

1. Driver Operators shall don and utilize same the personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

D. Surface Ice or Cold-Water Rescues

1. Driver Operators entering water shall wear cold water entry suits.
1. Driver Operators operating in a hot or warm zone on land shall wear Personal Flotation Device vests or provided Shore Suits
2. Structural firefighting personal protective equipment WILL NOT be worn in
3. the Warm or Hot Zone of an Ice, Cold Water or other water related incident.

E. Surface Water or Swift Water Rescues

1. Driver Operators entering water shall wear dry suits, personal flotation devices with rigging ability, water helmets, water work boots and neoprene water gloves. a strobe light, whistle and Neko Knife shall be installed on the personal floatation devices.
2. Driver Operators operating in a hot or warm zone on land shall wear Personal Flotation Device vests or provided Shore Suits
3. Structural firefighting personal protective equipment WILL NOT be worn in the Warm or Hot Zone of a Surface Water or Swift Water Rescue, or other water related incident.

F. Wilderness Search and Rescue

Driver Operators shall don and utilize same the personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

G. Hazardous Materials Response

Driver Operators shall don and utilize same the personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

H. Emergency Medical Services Responses Involving Patient Care

Driver Operators shall don and utilize same the personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

I. Emergency Medical Services Assistance Responses i.e. Lift Assists

Driver Operators shall don and utilize the same personal protective equipment as the crew members of their assigned company as soon as possible after arrival on a scene.

3. Other Operations

Chiefs and / or other Command Officers will wear a minimum of their turnout coat and helmet when operating at a command post. Full personal protective equipment will be donned and worn if a Chief or other Command officer enters the warm or hot zone for any reason.

4. Exceptions

Chiefs, Command and Company Officers may approve modified levels of personal protective equipment provided that the modification does not compromise safety.

5. Care, Maintenance & Inspection of Personal Protective Equipment

- a. All fire suppression personnel are personally responsible to inspect their personal protective equipment on a regular basis and properly report any deficiencies via established procedures i.e. an equipment report.
- b. All personal protective equipment will be maintained as prescribed by manufacturer recommendations and in accordance with applicable regulations and standards i.e. OSHA, PEOSHA, NFPA.
- c. No manufacturer tags and / or labels will be removed from any PPE.
- d. When personal protective equipment is placed out of service, a tag will be placed on the equipment. The tag will indicate the firefighter's name, identification number, the date the equipment was taken out of service, the reason the equipment was taken out of service, and who placed the equipment out of service.
- e. In addition to individual firefighter inspections of their own personal protective equipment and in preparation for replacement equipment purchases, the District's Fire Chief or the Chief's designee will coordinate annual PPE inspections in order to evaluate the overall condition of all PPE used by fire suppression personnel.

6. Personal Protective Equipment Contamination

1. PPE contaminated with products of combustion, fire debris or other contaminants will be initially decontaminated pursuant to the provisions of Joint Tactical Considerations Document 23-01.
2. Upon returning to quarters, contaminated PPE will be promptly washed pursuant to NFPA Schedule 1971 guidelines. If not already provided, spare PPE will be provided to on duty fire suppression personnel who must wash contaminated PPE.
4. When determined to be necessary by a District's Chief or the Chief's designee, PPE will be sent out for cleaning by a competent service provider.

7. Enforcement – Policy Violations

Violations of this policy without just cause will result in discipline.