

# NORTH WHATCOM FIRE AND RESCUE

## FIRE DISTRICT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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<b>Number:</b>	<b>0900.0301.00</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>2/15/2018</b>
<b>Area:</b>	<b>Emergency Readiness and Response / Operations</b>	<b>Page:</b>	<b>1 of 5</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Suppression Personal Protective Equipment</b>	<b>Approved:</b>	

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### 1.0 General

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue is committed to providing their emergency responders with safe personal protective equipment that offers both thermal and physical protection.

### 2.0 Purpose

It is the purpose of this policy to establish the guidelines for the use and maintenance of personal protective clothing, particularly, bunker gear.

### 3.0 Scope

This policy applies to conditions that call for the use of personal protective clothing (bunker gear) and to the use of such equipment in providing emergency and non-emergency services.

### 4.0 Policy

#### 4.1 Definitions

*PPE* – Personal Protective Equipment

*Bunker gear* – fire protective clothing

*Contamination* – the presence of extraneous, especially infectious material that renders a substance harmful.

*Gross Decontamination* – the act of removing visible particles of contaminants from helmet, face piece, flash-hood, coat, pants and boots, immediately after exiting a hazardous environment.

*SCBA* - self-contained breathing apparatus

#### 4.2 Policy Statement – Personal Protective Equipment

- 4.2.1 Full bunker gear designed and designated for emergency response tasks, shall be donned and worn by members whenever they are engaging in hazardous tasks. NWFR will provide such gear. Only PPE that is issued by NWFR will be allowed.

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**Cancels: New**

**Revised:**

**Reviewed:**

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- 4.2.2 Members shall be trained in donning, doffing, care, use, inspection, maintenance and limitations of the bunker gear assigned to them or available for their use.
- 4.2.3 Members shall be responsible for the routine maintenance of the bunker gear ensemble following the manufacturer's recommendations.
- 4.2.4 NWFR shall provide for the cleaning of the soiled or contaminated bunker gear. Such cleaning shall be performed by either a cleaning service or at a NWFR facility that is equipped to handle contaminated clothing.
- 4.2.5 Gross decontamination shall be performed immediately after exiting a hazardous environment and prior to removing the regulator attached to the face piece. This procedure will be done by another firefighter that is breathing on an SCBA. (WAC 296-305-05002)(15).
- 4.2.6 Contaminated bunker gear shall be isolated and the contaminants identified if possible. This will be initiated by bagging contaminated clothing at the scene. All bagged gear will be placed in any compartment that is not in direct contact with the passenger compartment of the apparatus.
- 4.2.7 All contaminated gear will be laundered immediately upon returning to quarters, per manufacturer's recommendations.
- 4.2.8 Repairs, alterations, and modifications to bunker gear shall be performed by a qualified repair service as directed by NWFR. Repairs include any and all alterations, modifications, additions, deletions or any other changes made to the manufacturer's specification.
- 4.2.9 All bunker gear shall be inspected semi-annually by an individual qualified and designated by NWFR.
- 4.2.10 At no time shall an apparatus begin response to an emergency unless all members are seated, belted and "suited up".
- 4.2.11 While on EMS incidents, all members shall wear whatever protective clothing is required to afford complete personal protection.
- 4.2.12 Retro-reflective safety vests shall be worn when directing traffic or working in traffic areas.

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### **4.3 Eye and Face Protection**

- 4.3.1 Face and eye protection shall be provided by NWFR and used by members engaged in fire suppression and other operations involving hazards to the eye and face.
- 4.3.2 Persons whose vision requires the use of corrective lenses or spectacles, and who are required by this standard to wear eye protection, shall wear goggles or spectacles of one of the following types:
  - 4.3.2.1 Spectacles with protective lenses that provide optical correction.
  - 4.3.2.2 Goggles that can be worn over corrective spectacles without disturbing the adjustment of the spectacles.
  - 4.3.2.3 Goggles that incorporate corrective lenses mounted behind the protective lens.
- 4.3.3 It is the responsibility of the member to advise NWFR of the need for corrective lenses.
- 4.3.4 Goggles shall be inspected, cleaned and disinfected prior to being re-issued to other members.

### **4.4 Hand Protection**

- 4.4.1 NWFR will provide hand protection for members engaged in emergency response activities including firefighting or rescue.
- 4.4.2 It shall be the responsibility of every member to use and wear the appropriate gloves provided by NWFR.
- 4.4.3 Members are responsible for selecting the appropriate level of hand protection consistent with the risk or hazards provided.
- 4.4.4 Gloves should not be kept in direct contact with flame or molten metal. Structural gloves are not intended to provide protection neither for proximity fire entry applications nor from radiological or chemical hazards.

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### **4.5 Foot Protection for Structural Firefighting**

- 4.5.1 NWFR shall provide protective footwear to all members for use during structural firefighting operations.
- 4.5.2 Structural firefighting footwear is designed to provide limited thermal and physical protection to the wearer's feet and ankles. The use of protective footwear must be consistent with manufacturer's recommendations.
- 4.5.3 Protective footwear must not be kept in direct contact with flame or molten metal. Protective footwear is not designed to provide protection for proximity or fire entry applications nor from radiological, biological or chemical hazards.

### **4.6 Head Protection**

- 4.6.1 NWFR will provide helmets to members who engage in, or are exposed to, the hazards of structural firefighting.
- 4.6.2 Helmets shall be provided with face shields or goggles.
- 4.6.3 Helmet accessories shall not interfere with the function of the helmet or its component parts and shall not degrade the helmet's performance.
- 4.6.4 Members shall be responsible for the routine inspection and cleaning of helmets.

### **5.0 Control Mechanisms**

- 5.1 The Assistant Chief of Operations shall be responsible to ensure that cleaning, disinfecting and inspecting of personal protective gear (bunker gear) is accomplished according to the published recommendations of the manufacturer.
- 5.2 The Fire Chief shall be responsible for reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

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### 6.0 References

- WAC 296-305-02004
- WAC 296-305-02002
- WAC 296-305-05002
- NFPA 1971

Approved:	
	Chairman, Board of Fire Commissioners North Whatcom Fire & Rescue
Date:	

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