

Surrey Fire Service Operational Guidelines

Personal Protective Clothing Equipment (PPE) Maintenance	O.G. #1.03.01.02	Page 1 of 3
	Eff. January 12, 2016	Init. of FC

PURPOSE: To ensure the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is maintained in good condition. To ensure that all suppression personnel are able to access spare PPE when their own gear is unavailable due to repair or contamination.

SCOPE: All Fire Operations personnel with issued PPE

POLICY: Personal protective equipment should be maintained in a manner to ensure optimal performance and service life.

PROCEDURE:

1. Definitions

Routine Cleaning – The light cleaning of ensembles or elements performed by the end user without taking the elements out of service. Examples include brushing off dry debris, rinsing off debris with a water hose, and spot cleaning. Routine Cleaning is done after each use any elements that are soiled shall receive routine cleaning. Should routine cleaning fail to render the element(s) sufficiently clean for service, the element(s) shall receive advanced cleaning.

Advanced Cleaning – The thorough cleaning of ensembles or elements by washing with cleaning agents. Advanced cleaning usually requires elements to be temporarily taken out of service. Examples include hand washing, machine washing, and contract cleaning. Advanced Cleaning is done every six months, at a minimum, elements that have been issued, used, and are soiled, shall receive advanced cleaning. Chlorine bleach or chlorinated solvents should not be used to clean or decontaminate. Cleaning or decontamination solution shall not be greater than pH 10.5. Heavy scrubbing or high velocity power washers shall not be used.

Air-drying: Place elements in an area with good ventilation; do not dry in direct sunlight.

2. Cleaning

On scene gross decontamination:

- Any time PPE is exposed to the products of combustion or other contaminants, it should be thoroughly rinsed with clean water at the scene of the incident. Dirty turn out gear must not be worn in the passenger compartment of any fire department vehicle without prior gross decontamination. This is part of the routine cleaning of PPE elements.

Surrey Fire Service Operational Guidelines

Personal Protective Clothing Equipment (PPE) Maintenance	O.G. #1.03.01.02	Page 2 of 3
	Eff. January 12, 2016	Init. of FC

Advanced Cleaning – Should be done a minimum of 2 times per year and following any exposure to smoke or contaminants when a routine cleaning is not sufficient to adequately clean PPE.

- **Halls with washers**
When advanced cleaning is necessary, gear should be laundered by separating the liner from the outer shell and washing the inner and outer components separately. All fasteners and Velcro should be fastened. Gear should be hung to dry in well ventilated area. The fire hall furnace rooms are not to be used for drying PPE.
- **Halls without washers**
Fire halls without gear washers are to utilize the nearest fire hall with a washer to launder the gear as described above. The on duty crew at the hall with a washer is expected to assist with ensuring the gear is washed and hung to dry. The member whose gear has been washed should be notified once it has been laundered.
- **Note:** PPE that has been heavily soiled but is still washable (ie: blood spattered, small amounts of diesel fuel etc.) can be pre-soaked with a 50/50 mix of laundry detergent and water applied to the area for a minimum of 20 minutes prior to the advanced cleaning as described above.


Extensively Soiled or Contaminated Gear

- PPE extensively soiled by a large amount of material (i.e.: soaked with blood or diesel etc.) or affected by possible biological or hazardous material must be evaluated for disposal or specialized cleaning. The Battalion Chief should be notified for a determination. Soiled gear must first go through a gross decontamination procedure on scene. The gear will then be packaged in the large clear poly bags that have been placed on the fire apparatus for this purpose. Soiled gear must be properly packaged and identified. Management of PPE that has become contaminated with hazardous materials will adhere to the procedures stated in OG 1.03.05

3. Inspection

Turn out gear should be routinely inspected a minimum of twice per year or as needed. The components of the gear should be separated and inspected for physical or thermal damage, functionality of closures, proper fit, damaged trim, missing parts and correct installation of drag rescue device. All inspections and cleaning of PPE are to be recorded in FDM Maintenance Gear Inspection and Repairs section.

**Surrey Fire Service
Operational Guidelines**

Personal Protective Clothing Equipment (PPE) Maintenance	O.G. #1.03.01.02	Page 3 of 3
	Eff. January 12, 2016	 Init. of FC

4. Repairs

PPE requiring repair must be turned into the gear room for evaluation and to determine where it will be repaired. Personnel are not allowed to drop PPE off to a repair facility themselves. Suppression officers can contact Hall 2 staff by phone for issues of an emergent nature. All routine requests for minor repairs or new equipment are to be e-mailed to FirePPE@surrey.ca .

5. Replacement Gear


Temporary Use: If spare gear is required for a short period of time it may be obtained by contacting the on-duty crew at Hall 2.. It must be obtained in person and cannot be transported by inter-department mail. The gear is to be returned to fire hall 2 once it is no longer required and must be cleaned and dry..

6. Removing Gear From Service

The gear room members at Hall 2 will manage the tracking and inventory of all turn out gear. When an individual's gear has reached the end of its service life, does not pass its yearly inspection or has been damaged or contaminated it must be replaced. The gear room members will assess the gear, arrange for temporary replacement if required and order replacement gear.

7. Helmets, Gloves, Balaclavas

Helmets, firefighting gloves, utility gloves, balaclavas and safety glasses can be requested from the gear room at Hall 2 as required.

 _____ Signature of Fire Chief	This O.G. Replaces: #1.03.01.02 Issued on: May 3, 2011
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