



GENERAL ORDER

GENERAL ORDER 150.19

Firefighting Hood and Glove Exchange

BUREAU OF SAFETY AND HEALTH

Issue Date: June 13, 2019

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1 APPLICABILITY

2 All Operational Personnel

3 POLICY

4 Several studies have shown that carcinogens and other toxic materials can accumulate on Personal
5 Protective Equipment (PPE) during fire suppression activities. Firefighting hoods and gloves are two of
6 the most problematic pieces of PPE as the hood sits directly on skin which is highly permeable; and gloves
7 have been shown to accumulate concentrations of carcinogens 100 times greater than that found on
8 hoods. (Cancer Among U.S. Firefighters)

9 In an effort to decrease the amount of carcinogens and other toxic agents to which firefighters are
10 exposed, the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (Department) has implemented a
11 hood and glove exchange program. The purpose of the program is to immediately replace contaminated
12 firefighting hoods and gloves with clean replacements after exposure to the products of combustion.

13 DEFINITIONS

- 14 ➤ **Contamination/Contaminated** – The process by which ensembles and ensemble elements are
15 exposed to hazardous materials, bodily fluids, or CBRN terrorism agents (NFPA 1851, 3.3.15).
16
- 17 ➤ **Manufacturer** – The entity that directs and controls any of the following: compliant product
18 design, compliant product manufacturing, or compliant product quality assurance; or the entity
19 that assumes the liability for the compliant product or provides the warranty for the compliant
20 product (NFPA 1851, 3.3.58).
21
- 22 ➤ **Soiled/Soiling** – The accumulation of materials that are not considered hazardous materials, body
23 fluids, or CBRN terrorism agents but that could degrade the performance of the ensemble or
24 ensemble element (NFPA 1851, 3.3.87).

25 PROCEDURES

26 GENERAL:

27 This document is geared towards the Emergency Services Bureau; other bureaus should develop their
28 own exchange policies should the processes outlined within not be conducive to that bureau's
29 operations.

- 30 • Availability of clean PPE:

- 31 ○ Safety 1, BC1, BC2, and BC3 shall carry the following items on their vehicles:
 - 32 ■ One (1) large Rubbermaid style tote stocked with:
 - 33 ● 20 hoods of varying sizes and styles
 - 34 ● 35 firefighting gloves of varying sizes (to include, but not limited to: 10
 - 35 Large pairs of gloves, 10 Medium pairs of gloves, 10 Small pairs of gloves, 5
 - 36 Extra Small pairs of gloves)
 - 37 ■ Large PPE cleaning style plastic bags for the collection and transportation of Soiled
 - 38 PPE.
- 39
- 40 ○ Hoods and gloves shall not be marked by the end user in any fashion to include: name, EID,
- 41 initials, etc. The expectation is that hoods and gloves will be exchanged often and shall not
- 42 be issued to any one specific individual.
- 43

44 EXCHANGE PROCEDURE:

- 45 ● The Incident Safety Officer (or their designee) (ISO) shall be responsible for ensuring that the
- 46 following occurs whenever firefighting hoods or gloves are Contaminated or Soiled during
- 47 firefighting activities:
 - 48 ○ Each firefighter shall place their Contaminated hood and/or gloves into the gear cleaning
 - 49 bag provided by any of the Battalion Chiefs or Safety 1.
 - 50 ○ The firefighter shall be issued a clean hood and/or gloves by the Battalion Chief or ISO (or
 - 51 their designee).
 - 52
- 53 ● Whenever Contaminated gear is collected, it is transported (not in the passenger compartment of
- 54 any vehicle) to the appropriate site that has an extractor, and will be laundered in the extractor
- 55 according to the Manufacturer's recommendations (during the daytime hours of 07:00-16:00;
- 56 after hour incidents that require collection shall be bagged and notification made to the supply
- 57 unit the following morning).
 - 58 ○ The primary laundering location is the Supply Unit.
 - 59 ○ Refer to General Order 530.02: Personal Protective Equipment for other stipulations.
 - 60 ○ Cleaned items shall then be returned to the clean bin in the vehicle.
 - 61

62 EXCHANGE TRIGGERS:

- 63 ● Firefighting hoods and/or gloves shall be exchanged whenever they become Contaminated.
- 64 Examples of such Contamination include, but are not limited to:
 - 65 ○ Final exit from the hazard zone during a structure fire.
 - 66 ■ Exchange after a structure fire is **mandatory** for all members who operated in the
 - 67 hazard zone.
 - 68 ○ Completion of suppression activities of a vehicle fire, dumpster fire, or other miscellaneous
 - 69 fires.
 - 70 ○ Fires conducted by Education and Training staff that fall into the above criteria.
 - 71 ○ Any time the member feels that their hood or gloves have become Contaminated with
 - 72 carcinogens they shall notify their officer. The officer shall notify their Battalion Chief or
 - 73 safety officer to arrange a time to exchange the soiled PPE.
 - 74

75 PERSONALLY OWNED PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (POPE):

- 76 ● Members shall be permitted to purchase and use their own hoods and gloves (POPE) so long as
- 77 they are included on the list of approved items provided by the Supply Unit which can be located
- 78 on the Bureau of Logistics' Intranet page.

- 79 • By choosing to wear POPE, members agree to the following:
- 80 ○ This order and the procedures contained herein shall apply to members opting to wear
- 81 POPE.
- 82 ○ Members shall comply with all exchange triggers listed in this order.
- 83 ○ Members shall place their POPE in the same collection bag at the same time as members
- 84 who wear Department issued hoods and gloves.
- 85 ○ The member will receive a Department issued hood and pair of gloves when they place
- 86 their soiled hood and gloves in the collection bag.
- 87 ○ The Supply Unit will wash and dry the members' POPE along with and at the same time as
- 88 the other PPE that was collected at the scene.
- 89 ○ After cleaning, the POPE will be separated from Department issued hoods and gloves and
- 90 kept at the Supply Unit until such a time as it can be picked up by the member.
- 91 ○ Members shall hand in the Department issued hood and pair of gloves they received when
- 92 they placed their soiled POPE in the collection bag.
- 93 ○ Members must retrieve their POPE from the Supply Unit while off duty unless prior
- 94 approval is granted by the on-duty Battalion Chief.
- 95 ○ The Department will not be responsible for POPE that is lost or damaged during the
- 96 collection or cleaning process.

97 REFERENCES

- 98 • Cancer Among U.S. Firefighters <http://safe->
- 99 [d.org/2018handouts/Cancer_Among_US_Firefighters.pdf](http://safe-d.org/2018handouts/Cancer_Among_US_Firefighters.pdf)

100 SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT CHANGES

101 New General Order

102 FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

- 103 • None

104 APPROVED

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