

*K.W. Perkins*, *Fire Chief***PURPOSE**

Firefighters routinely respond to emergencies that pose some type of mechanical, thermal, toxic, or biological hazard. One of the most basic actions that firefighters can take to help prevent injuries to themselves, or possible death, is to properly maintain and wear their assigned personal protective equipment (PPE).

OBJECTIVE

To provide personnel with guidelines that define when firefighting PPE shall be worn.

SCOPE

All Personnel

DEFINITIONS

Firefighting PPE - Bunker coat, bunker pants (with suspenders), boots, helmet, gloves, protective hood, and eye protection.

Hot Zone – The area where an immediately dangerous to life and health atmosphere exists, immediately around the incident where serious threat of harm exists, which includes the collapse zone for a structure fire, and where entry into such zone requires the use of PPE, self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and specialized training required under Florida statutes.

Warm Zone – The area immediately outside of the hot zone. This area still presents a significant amount of danger to the public, victims, and responders. Examples of these areas include tool staging areas for fires and vehicle accidents, decontamination areas, and areas where rapid intervention teams are staged.

Cold Zone – The area immediately outside of the warm zone. This area should not present any danger to the public, victims, or responders. Examples of these areas include rehabilitation areas, staging, news media areas, and areas where other support functions are carried out.

ALL PERSONNEL

Serviceable PPE will be issued to all suppression personnel by ECFR. Privately owned PPE must meet applicable NFPA and/or OSHA standards and be approved for use by the appropriate District or Battalion Chief.

Personnel responding to any report of a fire or fire alarm shall don their bunker coat, pants, boots, and helmet prior to boarding fire apparatus in preparation for an emergency response. Personnel shall be seated with their seatbelt fastened while the apparatus is in motion. Due to seatbelts interfering with the donning process of seat mounted SCBA's,

*K.W. Perkins*, *Fire Chief*

personnel should secure their SCBA straps prior to applying their seatbelt, or don their SCBA after removal of their seatbelt at the emergency scene.

Unless otherwise directed by the Incident Commander (IC) or Safety Officer, all personnel operating within the hot or warm zone at an incident shall wear full PPE. The IC and Safety Officer will not allow any personnel to doff any element of their PPE, including SCBA, in these zones unless a clear determination has been made that there is no immediate danger to life or health.

Unless otherwise directed by the IC or Safety Officer, personnel operating strictly in the cold zone are not required to utilize PPE.

The size and shape of operating zones will vary at each incident. The IC or Safety Officer will define operational zones.

DRIVER/OPERATORS

Driver/Operators should not have restricted or impaired motor-sensory skills while driving apparatus. Therefore, driver/operators will not be required to don PPE until after arrival on the emergency scene. Once initial hoselines and/or equipment have been deployed, driver/operators will be required to don their bunker pants, boots, helmet, gloves, and eye protection while conducting pumping or aerial operations. Driver/Operators must don all PPE, including a SCBA if acting in the capacity of one of the two-in-two-out personnel.

INCIDENT COMMANDERS AND GENERAL STAFF FUNCTIONS

Unless operating at a remote command post, IC's and personnel filling general staff functions should minimally don their bunker coat and helmet. This makes them readily identifiable to on-scene and arriving personnel, media representatives, and the public. However, IC's must don all PPE, including a SCBA if acting in the capacity of one of the two-in-two-out personnel.

IC's and Safety Officers must use their previous experience, training, and established standards to determine what level of PPE must be worn by responding personnel.