

	<b>Department of Public Safety</b>	
	<b>Standard Operating Guidelines</b>	
	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Cancer Prevention</b>
	<b>Section:</b>	<b>Operations</b>
	<b>Guideline Number:</b>	<b>314</b>
	<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>April 23, 2025</b>
<b>Revised Date:</b>		
<b>Signature of Approval:</b>	<b>Charles R. Pruitt</b> Director	

**Purpose**

To provide for the health and safety of all Department of Public Safety employees by reducing their exposure to carcinogenic agents and the chances developing cancer, as well as make cancer awareness part of everyday practice.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all Department of Public Safety employees.

**Policy**

The procedures outlined here will provide guidance to Department of Public Safety employees to minimize their exposure to carcinogens that are associated with diesel exhaust and products of combustion by identifying procedures to reduce contact time.

**Procedure**

The following procedures will be used by all Department of Public Safety employees while on duty. Procedures have been broken down into 4 sections – **Station, Incident, Rehab, and Post Incident.**

**Station Procedures:**

The following steps should be taken at the fire station to minimize exposures to carcinogenic compounds that are commonly found in diesel exhaust and products of combustion associated with fire suppression operations. Additional practices may be instituted; however, the following have been determined as “Best Practices” to help reduce the chances of cancer:

1. Do not bring turn-out gear into the living quarters of the station for any reason.
2. Avoid propping open doors from the bay into the living quarters.
3. Keep ice machine doors closed at all times and immediately after use. (Stations with machines in bays)
4. Do everything possible not to run apparatus in the bay areas any longer than absolutely necessary. Limit run time until everyone is in or near the apparatus.
5. If applicable, open front and back bay doors when pulling into the station.
6. **Never** run motors with bay doors closed. (This includes apparatus and small engines)

7. Leave bay doors open as long as possible after parking apparatus or after running motorized equipment.
8. Do not stage PPE in direct line or near the exhaust of apparatus. PPE should be staged in a manner that keeps it off of the bay floor or ground. Examples: on the apparatus steps, inside the cab or inside a compartment.

## **Incident Procedures:**

### Respiratory Protection

SCBA provides the best respiratory protection when operating in environments that are IDLH. This is true for those toxins that pose both an immediate and long-term health threat. The practice of utilizing carbon monoxide monitoring to determine when to remove SCBA is an ineffective method to determine air quality and does not rule out other products of combustion that are known carcinogens such as Benzene and vinyl chlorides.

The use of SCBA will continue until all interior operations are completed. The incident commander will make the final determination. This includes:

- Overhaul
- Salvage
- Removal of tools, hose lines and equipment
- Determining origin and cause
- Any activity that disrupts the contents of the structure

If the structure's environment is unfit for the occupants to enter without respiratory protection then SCBA use is required.

### Absorption Protection

For the purposes of clarification, "Incident" time frame is from the time the first emergency unit arrives "on scene" until the last unit "goes available". All Department of Public Safety employees involved in fire suppression or salvage & overhaul operations will not "Go Available" from the scene without being properly decontaminated.

### **On-scene decontamination should consist of the following steps:**

1. Gross decontamination wash, done prior to going to rehab or returning to service, will consist of rinsing off gear and SCBA while remaining on air. (weather permitting)
  - a. A decontamination area with a dedicated hand-line shall be established.
  - b. Use of water should be limited to what is required to remove soot and debris.
  - c. Soap and brushes from emergency decontamination kits shall be used in situations when it is necessary to remove heavy soil from PPE.
  - d. During cold weather, dry methods such as brushing shall be used, starting from the head and working down to remove large particles.
2. All personnel will clean hands, neck, and face with approved wipes.
3. All SCBA masks will be cleaned inside and out.

4. All tools and equipment will be rinsed off prior to leaving the scene.

### **Rehab Procedures:**

The following procedures will be taken when instructed by the IC or designee to go to rehab:

#### **Level 1 Rehab:**

Use wipes or soap/water to initiate decon to clean neck, face, hands and any other exposed areas.

#### **Level 2 & 3 Rehab:**

1. Gross decontamination of PPE should be done on the fire ground using such means as water streams, fans, and/or brushes prior to entering the rehab area.
2. Employees shall remove SCBA, mask, helmet, hoods, and turnout coat (if weather permitting) and stage items outside of the rehab area.
3. Rinse or brush off remaining turnout gear before entering rehab area.
4. Use wipes to initiate decon to clean neck, face, hands and any other exposed areas.

### **Post Incident Procedures:**

The following shall be completed prior to leaving the scene:

1. Final gross decon of all tools, PPE and SCBA's.
2. All SCBA masks will be cleaned inside and out.
3. Except for SCBA masks, grossly contaminated PPE shall be placed in a large clear plastic bag and seal it for transportation back to the fire station.

The following should be completed after leaving the scene:

1. **Station Procedures:**
  - A. Cleaning gloves shall be the minimum PPE used for decontaminating equipment and tools.
  - B. Remove all PPE from sealed garbage bags.
  - C. Thoroughly clean all SCBA's, masks and equipment using the manufacturer recommended guidelines.
  - D. Wash all exposed hose lines that were used during suppression operations.
  - E. Wash apparatus involved in fire operations.
  - F. Surfaces in the cabs of apparatus should be wiped clean.
  - G. Clean portable radios and straps.
    1. Use wet wash cloths to clean portable radios.
    2. Do not immerse radios in water.
  - H. Hang all gear to dry.
  - I. Replace flash hood with clean spare.
  - J. Replace gloves with clean spare set.
  - K. Wash PPE ensembles ASAP (Pants, Coat, Gloves, Flash Hood, etc.)
    1. When unable to immediately wash structural gear, allow it to air out in the apparatus bay.

2. Battalion Chiefs & Captains:

- A. Will ensure that all hoods and gloves were replaced with clean spares.
- B. Will ensure that all soiled helmets, hoods and gloves are washed immediately.
- C. Will document all exposures.
- D. Will ensure staff have wipes and charcoal soap.

3. Personal Procedures:

These steps should be completed as soon as practically possible while taking into account call volume and staffing.

A. Shower thoroughly

- Take a shower, setting the water temperature to the highest temperature tolerable to allow skin pores to open and release any contamination from the skin.
- Use charcoal soaps or those that do not contain moisturizers. These ingredients promote the adhesion of contaminants to skin.

B. Change into a clean uniform.

C. Wash contaminated uniforms in fire station washers only.

- Place uniform into a sealed garbage bag if it cannot be washed immediately or if needs to be transported prior to washing due to a change in station assignment.
- Do not wash contaminated uniforms at home or outside of the fire station.

D. At the end of the shift, members should change into a clean uniform to wear home.

1. It is recommended that employees wear civilian clothes to and from the fire station.

E. Transporting PPE.

1. It is recommended when transporting contaminated or potentially contaminated PPE via POV to place it in a clear sealed plastic bag and then into the issued gear bag to prevent contaminating the interior of both the gear bag and vehicle.
2. It is recommended to not store bagged contaminated gear in the passenger compartment of a vehicle.