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| ERIE COUNTY FIRE ADVISORY BOARD |
| Gross Decontamination of PPE |
| Best Practices |
| V 1.0 |
| Adopted Date: 24 September 2020 |

- 1.0) **Subject -** Gross Decontamination of PPE/SCBA
- 2.0) **Purpose -** To limit firefighting personnel exposure to products of combustion, post incident/training
- 3.0) **Scope -** This Best Practices is a recommendation to all Erie County, New York Fire Departments and shall be performed at all Erie County Training Facilities

4.0) **Definitions -**
Products of Combustion - Smoke, particulates, chemicals, gases, carcinogens and any other by-products of combustion.

PPE - Personal Protective Envelope/Equipment

SCBA - Self-contained breathing apparatus

Firefighting Personnel - Firefighters, fire brigade members (paid, volunteer or combination paid/volunteer), Public Safety Officers or any person engaged in firefighting operations, who are exposed to an IDLH (Immediate Danger to Life and Health) environment



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- 5.0) **Guidelines** – It is highly recommended that any responder (Firefighter, Law Enforcement, EMS, etc.) who has exited an IDLH or HOT environment be Decontaminated (De-Con) as per the following guidelines
- 5.1) Personnel shall not doff PPE/SCBA and shall maintain breathing via SCBA during De-Con.
 - 5.2) Personnel should, when practical, doff PPE/SCBA post De-Con, prior to entering the Rehabilitation (Re-Hab) Area/Sector.
 - 5.3) De-Con shall be performed in accordance to NYS DHS/OFPC Best Practices and in compliance with NFPA standards.
 - 5.4) Weather permitting, De-Con should be performed by;
 - a) Rinsing the PPE/SCBA, then applying a soap/water mixture, as per PPE manufacturer recommendations.
 - b) Brushing the PPE/SCBA with a soft brush.
 - c) Final rinse.
 - d) Cleaning of exposed areas of the skin and SCBA facepiece shall be performed post final rinse by utilizing sanitized wipes manufactured for the intended use. Used wipes shall be disposed of properly.
 - e) Post Incident bagging of PPE/SCBA and cleaning in accordance to NFPA guidelines, NYS Best Practices, Department policies and PPE/SCBA manufacturers’ specifications, post incident, is highly recommended.
 - 5.5) Inclement weather OR if personnel will be re-entering the IDLH/HOT environment post Re-Hab, De-Con should be performed by;
 - a) Dry brushing the PPE/SCBA with a soft brush.
 - b) Cleaning of exposed areas of the skin and SCBA facepiece shall be performed post dry brushing by utilizing sanitized wipes manufactured for the intended use. Used wipes shall be disposed of properly.



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- 5.6) When performing De-Con in accordance to 5.5, De-Con shall be performed as in 5.4, when practical, or bagged and cleaned in accordance to NFPA guidelines, NYS Best Practices, Department policies and PPE/SCBA manufacturers' specifications, post incident.
- 5.7) Personnel performing De-Con shall have PPE/SCBA donned (OR particulate mask approved for gross decontamination of products of combustion) and utilizing SCBA.

- 6.0) **Training** - All applicable personnel shall be trained to a level of competency by NYS Certified, Erie County Fire Instructors

- 7.0) **Exceptions** - This Best Practices shall not violate Department policies and/or NYS DHS/OFPC Best Practices, NFPA standards (Appendix I) or PPE/SCBA manufacturer's recommendations.



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Appendix I

NFPA 1851 – Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting 2020 Excerpt

7.2* Preliminary Exposure Reduction.

7.2.1 General.

7.2.1.1* Organizations shall include preliminary exposure reduction as part of their overall program for the care and maintenance of structural fire-fighting ensembles and ensemble elements and proximity fire-fighting ensembles and ensemble elements.

7.2.1.2* Organizations shall be responsible for implementing preliminary exposure reduction procedures on scene for ensemble and ensemble elements.

7.2.2 Preliminary Exposure Reduction Procedures.

7.2.2.1 * End users shall carry out preliminary exposure reduction immediately after exiting the emergency scene at any incident where their protective ensemble or ensemble elements could have become soiled or contaminated.

7.2.2.2 * Upon exiting the emergency scene, the end user shall remain on self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) air.

7.2.2.3 If returning to the emergency scene after an air cylinder change, any dry debris shall be brushed off the helmet, facepiece, and SCBA prior to changing out the cylinder.

7.2.2.4* If the end user is completing their time on scene, dry or wet mitigation techniques shall be conducted prior to the removal of any ensemble or ensemble elements.

7.2.2.4.1* The dry mitigation techniques shall be performed by brushing debris from the exterior of ensembles and ensemble elements with a soft bristle brush prior to removal.

7.2.2.4.2* The wet mitigation techniques shall be performed by gently rinsing the exterior of ensembles and ensemble elements using low-pressure and low-volume flow water.

7.2.2.4.2.1 A mild detergent shall be permitted to be used to aid in the wet mitigation technique, followed by gentle rinsing.



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7.2.2.4.2.2 Heavy scrubbing or spraying with high-velocity water jets such as a power washer shall not be used.

7.2.2.4.3 If used in combination, dry mitigation shall precede wet mitigation.

7.2.2.5* Following dry or wet mitigation, ensemble or ensemble elements shall be isolated and bagged. Where possible, ensemble or ensemble elements, even when bagged, shall not be transported in the passenger areas of apparatus or personal vehicles.

7.2.2.6 Following preliminary exposure reduction, the ensemble or ensemble element(s) shall be subjected to the appropriate cleaning procedures specified in Section 7.1.

7.2.3 Additional Requirements for Preliminary Exposure Reduction of Hood Interface Components. Following each structural fire or emergency service use, hood interface components shall be subjected to preliminary exposure reduction and advanced cleaning as specified in Section 7.3.

7.2.4* Additional Requirements for Preliminary Exposure Reduction of Eye and Face Protection Components. After each use, eye and face protection components that are provided as part of the helmet or as separate devices shall be subjected to preliminary exposure reduction and wiped off and cleaned.

7.2.5 Additional Requirements for Preliminary Exposure Reduction of Proximity Fire-Fighting Ensembles and Ensemble Elements. During preliminary exposure reduction, the use of a brush or any other abrasive cleaning devices on radiant reflective outer shells and other components of proximity fire-fighting protective ensembles and ensemble elements shall not be permitted.