

	 <b>ALBEMARLE COUNTY</b> <b>STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE</b>	
	<b>Subject:</b>	Personal Fireground Decontamination
	<b>Reference Number:</b>	SOG-DEP-002
	<b>Effective Date:</b>	18 October 2017
	<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
	<b>Signature of Approval:</b>	 <b>J. Dan Eggleston, Chief</b>

**Purpose:** To establish a standard policy and procedures for decontamination after personnel have been engaged in fire suppression activities in order to reduce exposure to known carcinogens.

**Scope:** This policy shall apply to all Albemarle County Fire Rescue personnel and any Albemarle County Fire Rescue volunteers.

**Background:** This SAP was developed as a result of industry-wide awareness of the heightened risk of firefighters developing cancer and knowledge of current best practices for mitigation of that risk. While these procedures will not eliminate all of the exposures to harmful carcinogens, it will help minimize the exposures.

**Definitions:**

1. **IDLH Atmosphere:** An atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive, or asphyxiate substance that poses an immediate threat to life or would cause irreversible or delayed adverse health effects or would interfere with an individual’s ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.
2. **PPV:** Positive Pressure Ventilation fan
3. **SCBA:** Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
4. **PPE:** Personal Protective Equipment appropriate for fire suppression activities
5. **ECC:** Emergency Communications Center

**Policy:**

This policy shall apply to all incidents at which an IDLH atmosphere involving carcinogens is determined to be present and personnel are operating within that IDLH atmosphere. While not all of the following steps will be applicable, this policy should also be followed after returning from a brush/wildland fire. If the IDLH is the result of a haz-mat incident, to include an incident involving carbon monoxide only, then the following does not apply. The Incident Commander shall make a determination regarding whether to implement this procedure at an incident and may do so fully or partially. The Incident Commander may also amend this procedure to account for environmental and / or weather concerns.

**Procedure:**

1. Personnel exiting an IDLH atmosphere shall proceed to a gross decontamination area. A wet, gross decontamination of large visible contaminants, on personnel and equipment, will take place. A dry, gross decontamination may be utilized in place of a wet process at the discretion of the Incident Commander. Personnel shall continue to utilize their SCBA during this step.
2. Personnel shall proceed to stand in front of a PPV fan while loosening their SCBA. PPE jackets and pants should be opened, allowing for air to pass between PPE and personnel for a minimum of 60 seconds in order to hasten off gassing. Personnel shall continue to utilize their SCBA during this step.
3. Personnel should remove SCBA mask, PPE hood and gloves. Provided wipes should be used to clean hands, wrists, face and neck area before proceeding either to Staging or Rehab areas.

4. If personnel proceed to Staging, they should remain in PPE after restoring their SCBA to ready condition and await further assignments. If personnel proceed to Rehab, they should remove PPE, to the extent that is practical, and utilize additional wipes on hands, wrists, face and neck area prior to eating or drinking.
5. Prior to leaving an incident, all PPE and contaminated equipment should be bagged, when possible, and placed onto apparatus. Bagged PPE and equipment should be placed in a compartment other than the cab of the apparatus. No contaminated equipment or PPE is permitted in the cab of an apparatus unless it is completely sealed in a bag.
6. If the Incident Commander deems it necessary, companies may remain out of service until clean PPE, personal decontamination and equipment decontamination has occurred. This decision will be based on the level of contamination and availability of additional resources in the system.
7. If personnel are available to bring clean PPE to personnel's station, the company should return to quarters and continue with decontamination procedures. If no personnel are available to deliver clean PPE, the company should remain out of service and proceed to COB-5 and access the Quartermaster storage area to obtain clean PPE.
8. Upon returning to the station, personnel shall decontaminate and clean any equipment used on scene, including but not limited to hand tools, SCBAs and SCBA bottles and PPE helmets. Contaminated PPE should be washed and dried in accordance with manufacturer recommended practices. The interior cab of the apparatus should be decontaminated and cleaned.
9. Personnel shall be required to shower and don clean uniforms.
10. Once all equipment is returned to service, apparatus are decontaminated and personnel have showered and donned clean uniforms, the company shall notify ECC that they are available for service.