

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Street Clothing and Work Uniforms. These garments, such as uniforms worn by police and emergency medical services personnel, provide almost no protection from the harmful effects of dangerous goods.

Structural Fire Fighters' Protective Clothing (SFPC). This category of clothing, often called turnout or bunker gear, means the protective clothing normally worn by fire fighters during structural fire fighting operations. It includes a helmet, coat, pants, boots, gloves and a hood to cover parts of the head not protected by the helmet and facepiece. This clothing must be used with full-facepiece positive pressure self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). This protective clothing should, at a minimum, meet the OSHA Fire Brigades Standard (29 CFR 1910.156). Structural fire fighters' protective clothing provides limited protection from heat and cold, but may not provide adequate protection from the harmful vapors or liquids that are encountered during dangerous goods incidents. Each guide includes a statement about the use of SFPC in incidents involving those materials referenced by that guide. Some guides state that SFPC provides limited protection. In those cases, the responder wearing SFPC and SCBA may be able to perform an expedient, that is quick "in-and-out", operation. However, this type of operation can place the responder at risk of exposure, injury or death. The incident commander makes the decision to perform this operation only if an overriding benefit can be gained (i.e., perform an immediate rescue, turn off a valve to control a leak, etc.). The coverall-type protective clothing customarily worn to fight fires in forests or wildlands is **not** SFPC and is not recommended nor referred to elsewhere in this guidebook.

Positive Pressure Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). This apparatus provides a constant, positive pressure flow of air within the facepiece, even if one inhales deeply while doing heavy work. Use apparatus certified by NIOSH and the Department of Labor/Mine Safety and Health Administration in accordance with 42 CFR Part 84. Use it in accordance with the requirements for respiratory protection specified in OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134 (Respiratory Protection) and/or 29 CFR 1910.156 (f) (Fire Brigades Standard). Chemical-cartridge respirators or other filtering masks are not acceptable substitutes for positive pressure self-contained breathing apparatus. Demand-type SCBA does not meet the OSHA 29 CFR 1910.156 (f)(1)(i) of the Fire Brigades Standard. If it is suspected that a Chemical Warfare Agent (CW) is involved, the use of NIOSH-certified respirators with CBRN protection are highly recommended.

Chemical Protective Clothing and Equipment. Safe use of this type of protective clothing and equipment requires specific skills developed through training and experience. It is generally not available to, or used by, first responders. This type of special clothing may protect against one chemical, yet be readily permeated by chemicals for which it was not designed. Therefore, protective clothing should not be used unless it is compatible with the released material. This type of special clothing offers little or no protection against heat and/or cold. Examples of this type of equipment have been described as (1) Vapor Protective

Suits (NFPA 1991), also known as Totally-Encapsulating Chemical Protective (TECP) Suits or Level A* protection (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120, Appendix A & B), and (2) Liquid-Splash Protective Suits (NFPA 1992 & 1993), also known as Level B* or C* protection (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120, Appendix A & B) or suits for chemical/biological terrorism incidents (NFPA 1994), class 1, 2 or 3 Ensembles. No single protective clothing material will protect you from all dangerous goods. Do not assume any protective clothing is resistant to cold and/or heat or flame exposure unless it is so certified by the manufacturer. (NFPA 1991 5-3 Flammability Resistance Test and 5-6 Cold Temperature Performance Test)

* Consult glossary for additional protection levels under the heading "Protective Clothing".