	HAMILTON COUNTY STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES		
	Effective Date: 7-18-2018	Category & Identification Number: Operations – 2018	
	Title: POST FIRE DECONTAMINATION		
	Approved By: HCFCA Membership	Revision Date:	Page: Page 1 of 6

PURPOSE

This standard operating guideline is intended to provide carcinogen exposure reduction guidelines and procedures for fire personnel following potential exposure in structure fires and other emergency response situations.

SCOPE


All department personnel shall take all measures necessary to protect themselves and others from the products of combustion or other contaminants. The Incident Commander shall ensure all Officers and Acting Company Officers direct personnel to follow these decontamination procedures as soon as possible to limit exposure.

Incident response to the following provide an example, but not a complete list of incidents to which this procedure applies:

- Structure Fires
- Training Fires (Live fire training, flashover)
- Hazmat Runs
- Vehicle Fires

The Incident Commander or Company Officer may determine that these procedures should be applied in the following incidents, based on circumstance:

- Dumpster Fires
- Vegetation and Wildland Fires
- Technical Rescue Emergency
- Vehicle Extrication
- Other details where it is determined decontamination is needed.

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PROCEDURES

Limiting Exposure

During the incident intervention, limiting the number of firefighters to those necessary for effective containment and control should be a premise for crew assignments. Additionally, limiting duration of exposure should be a consideration.

Utilization of PPE, especially respiratory protection (SCBA) is essential.

If possible, an electric or battery powered fan should be put in place to provide a continuous supply of fresh air into the structure as soon as practical, and throughout overhaul operations.

Gross Decontamination and Elimination of Possible Contaminants: Personnel


The Incident Commander (IC) should designate a decontamination sector after the “loss stopped” benchmark is reached or all needed fire ground functions are assigned.

All personnel who entered the hot zone or were exposed to the products of combustions or other contaminants should rotate through the decontamination sector.

Decontamination is required anytime gear is heavily exposed to products of combustion or other contaminants, or if a fire officer deems it necessary. Dry and then wet decontamination, as appropriate to the contaminants and the situation, should be initially done at the scene and before removal of PPE, especially SCBA.

If PPE is soiled by contaminants from the fire or other emergency incident it shall go through the following steps:

- All loose debris will be brushed off with the hand brooms
- Areas with visible contaminants will be washed with brushes, using Dawn or comparable liquid detergent on PPE, external SCBA parts and mask. Only approved cleaning procedures should be used on internal SCBA parts.

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- PPE should be rinsed off from top of the helmet down to remove as much contaminants as possible.
- It is recommended that heavily soiled PPE be bagged at the scene using department approved bags that are at least 6 mils thick. The bag opening should be twisted and taped closed or twisted and an overhand knot to keep sealed.

"Fire Wipes" or "Baby Wipes", provided by the department, should be used on the hands, face, neck, and any exposed areas as soon as possible when exiting the structure.

The IC should highly recommend mutual aid companies proceed through the decontamination sector if exposed to the products of combustions or other contaminants.

Prior to leaving the scene all personnel exposed to the products of combustion or other contaminants should be issued a clean hood and pair of gloves. Company officers are responsible for ensuring this happens as soon as possible after firefighting operations are over.

Gross Cleaning and Elimination of Possible Contaminants: Equipment

All fire equipment shall be cleaned before placing back on the fire apparatus which includes but not limited to the following items:


- SCBA
- SCBA Face piece using the proper cleaning agent
- All hand tools
- Nozzles
- Hose

While loading hose or equipment personnel should wear gloves, other than used structural firefighting gloves, to protect their hands from the products of combustion or being contaminated.

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Procedures for Fire Stations

- Upon arrival at station the following procedures should be done to limit exposure to personnel, fire apparatus and the station:
- Do not enter the living quarters of the fire station wearing PPE.
- Minimize the time contaminated station wear is worn in the station.
- Wash or wipe all surfaces of the apparatus using Simple Green.
- Clean all SCBA face pieces following manufacturer or department procedures if not already completed at the emergency scene.
- Replace equipment and or needed supplies.
- Start decontamination procedure for PPE per department or manufacturer procedures. PPE should be washed immediately if it is contaminated to the point it could affect personnel safety. PPE contaminated by hazardous materials shall be properly handled based upon the recommended decontamination procedures for the material involved in the incident.
- Clean Apparatus Cabs and crew riding positions
- All contaminated hoods and gloves shall be washed and placed back in the spare supply.
- After all equipment and supplies are replaced all personnel shall take a shower and put on clean clothing/uniforms. Ideally, this should be completed within 1 hour after returning to station.
- Use proper PPE detergent and washing machines.
- All fire companies shall follow these procedures for incident responses outside its own response area even if not directed by the Incident Commander.

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Fire Investigators

Fire investigators should follow their department's policy on PPE and documentation of any exposures while investigating fires. It is encouraged that the fire investigators have proper PPE and SCBA. Investigators should not be permitted to enter the scene of an IDLH atmosphere without the proper PPE. Actions should be taken to remove the IDLH atmosphere prior to the investigation beginning if the PPE is not available.

Gross Decontamination Equipment (Decon Bucket)

The decontamination buckets assigned to the engine, ladder, and rescue companies should be used in the decontamination sector (See Equipment Section).

Each company should carry the following items in the decontamination kit

5 gallon bucket with lid labeled DECON.

1 soft brush

1 hard brush

1 15 foot section of garden hose with adapter for discharge with nozzle

1 bottle of Dawn Dish Washing Detergent

1 bottle of Simple Green

2 packs of "Fire Wipes" or "Baby Wipes"

1 bottle of sun screen

4 wash clothes


2 bottles of water

EMS gloves

White or clear trash bags minimum of 6 mil

Reference:

- National Volunteer Fire Council Best Practices for Preventing FF Cancer
- Firefighter Cancer Support Network: Healthy In, Healthy Out
- Florida Firefighters Safety and Health Collaborative

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Revision History

Date	Author	Change Descriptions
4-18-2018	HC Committee	Initial Draft – Ready for Committee Review
5-14-2018	HC Committee	Initial draft revision for chiefs review
5-15-2018	HC Committee	Additional changes for chiefs review
6-21-2018	Ashbrock	Reorganization/reword: no chg in essential content; add Ref
6-28-2018	Meador	Formatted changes from 6-21-2018, added HCFA logo