

Porterville College Firefighter I Academy - Cadet Manual

APPENDIX B: REQUIRED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Personal Protective Equipment or (PPE) is very important to a firefighter's welfare and safety and its use must become second nature to the firefighter. Habits formed in training will translate into actions that occur in the emergency environment. **Good habits lead to a safer workplace. Cadets are responsible to bring their PPE with them to every class** and they shall wear them as directed by their instructors. PPE is to be cleaned prior to each class.

Protective clothing will be worn regularly during field sessions, and less frequently during classroom sessions. But it must be available (stored in the Cadet's vehicle) and ready for wear or inspection at a moments notice each day. Do not bring PPE into a classroom unless so directed by the class instructor.

During this Academy, students will use Structural Personal Protective Equipment:

Structural PPE (also called "turnouts") includes:

- ❖ Turnout coat
- ❖ Turnout pants
- ❖ Turnout boots
- ❖ Structural firefighting gloves
- ❖ Nomex hood
- ❖ Structural firefighting helmet with face shield or goggles – **provided by the College**
- ❖ Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) – **provided by the College**

The majority of "hands-on" training will be conducted wearing Structural PPE. The Academy tee shirt, uniform pant and Academy drill/work boot (field uniform) will be used when instructors deem it appropriate to the tasks at hand. Working for extended periods of time in Structural PPE can be dangerous due to the potential for Cadets to become overheated. Under these conditions, Cadets may be directed to wear just the field uniform to avoid potential injury from overheating.

Maintenance of Protective Clothing:

Personal Protective Equipment will be maintained in a clean and serviceable condition. Frequent washing may be necessary due to the activity involved in training. PPE should never be washed using bleach or detergents containing bleach. **Bleach destroys fire resistant fabric!**

Ultraviolet rays from sunlight are also extremely hard on the fire resistant fabrics used to construct Structural and Wildland PPE. **Keep your PPE in a gear bag or otherwise protected from the sun when not in use.**

PPE should be inspected weekly for damage. Any torn or damaged equipment that compromises safety is to be reported to the instructor or coordinator.

(Supplement to Appendix B – Personal Protective Equipment)

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Cadets enrolled in the Porterville College Firefighter I Academy MUST provide their own Structural Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Cadets may not share gear, and any Cadet lacking the required gear must be dropped from the Academy!

If a Cadet is not affiliated with a fire department that can provide PPE, the Cadet will need to either rent or purchase the following:

Structural PPE: (also called “turnouts” or “bunker gear”)

- ❖ Turnout coat, yellow or tan
- ❖ Turnout pants, yellow or tan
- ❖ Turnout boots
- ❖ Nomex hood
- ❖ Structural firefighting gloves
- ❖ All gear must be National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliant.

Special Notes:

1. Structural helmets will be issued to Cadets by the College.
2. A lightweight leather work glove may be used for some segment some segments of the Academy, can be purchased locally later, and will be discussed the first day of class.

Cadets can expect to pay approximately \$750 to rent Structural PPE. Purchase of this same gear will typically cost at least \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 depending on style and quality.

An Internet search for “**turnout gear rental**” or “**bunker gear rental**” will provide links to companies that rent gear.

Whether renting or buying, be certain to inquire about delivery dates. If a vendor has to special order or manufacture gear to fit you, it may take weeks, or even months, to arrive!

Should you rent gear, or should you buy gear?

It’s your choice, but when you go to work for a fire department, they will provide gear that meets their specifications. They will not let you use personal gear. However, should you prefer to buy gear, an Internet search for “turnout gear” or “wildland gear” will lead you to companies who sell firefighter clothing.