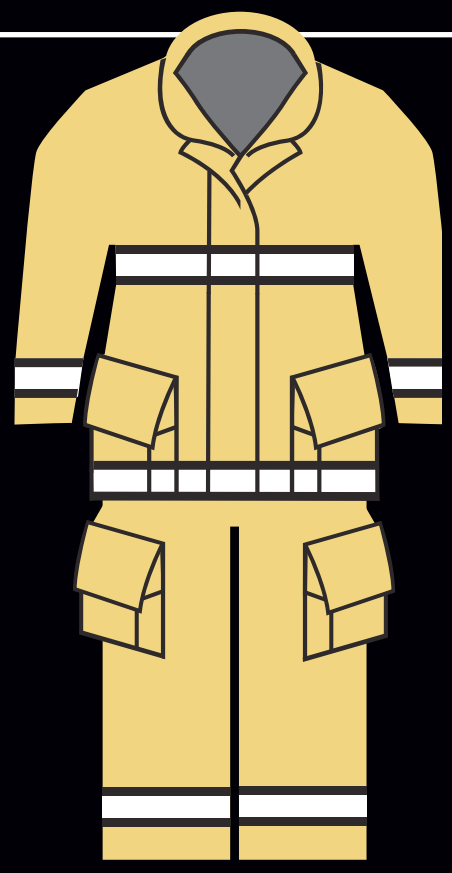


7 Steps to Clean Firefighting Turnout Gear



The fire service recognizes that clean PPE can help keep you safe. NFPA 1851 requires the user to evaluate gear after each use to check for any damage and to determine the appropriate cleaning level. Also included in NFPA 1851 are instructions for cleaning at the scene, known as “preliminary exposure reduction,” and an advanced cleaning at least twice a year or whenever on-scene cleaning is not sufficient. While it’s important that you read the detailed instructions found in NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting, here are seven steps to assist in cleaning your gear.

1. CLEAN BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE SCENE

Gently brush or lightly hose gear to remove the large, gross contaminants following overhaul. If an on-scene cleaning is not sufficient, the PPE requires an advanced cleaning.

NOTE: Step 1 constitutes the preliminary exposure reduction, which should be done at the scene. Steps 2 through 6 constitute an advanced cleaning, done at least twice a year or when on-scene cleaning is not sufficient.



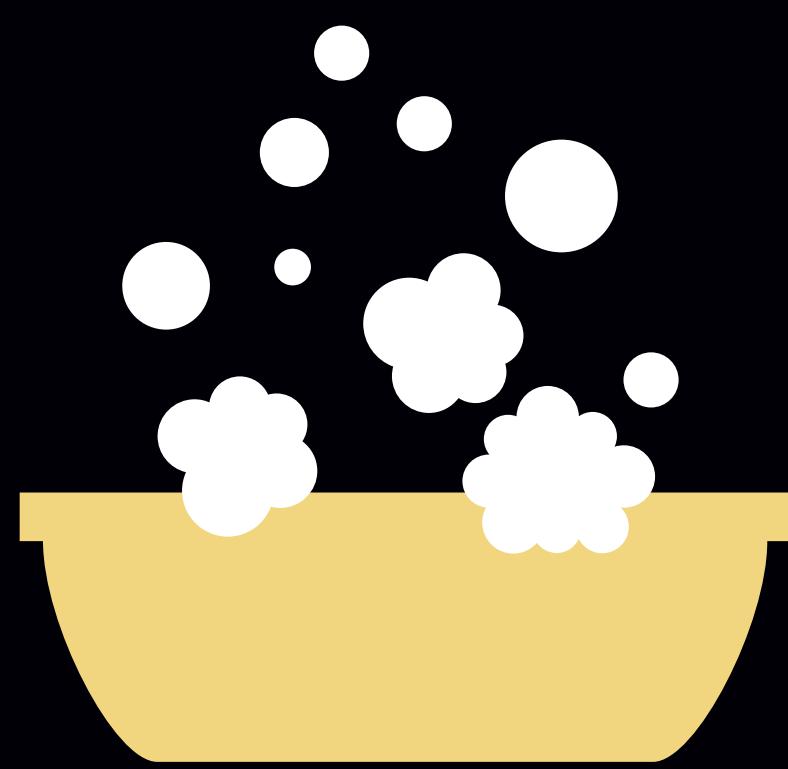
2. INSPECT AND DISASSEMBLE

Wear exam gloves and eye protection during this process. Separate the outer shells from the liner system and remove the drag rescue device. Look for deep stains, tears, holes, and other damage; any physical damage needs to be repaired before the gear is able to be returned to service. Turn the liner inside out for cleaning, and close all of the outer shell’s zippers, clasps, and hook and loop tapes.



3. PRESOAK AND WASH

Pretreat heavily soiled or spotted areas prior to machine laundering. Shells and liners are washed separately in a front loader washer/extractor; do not use an agitator. For advanced cleaning, wash water temperature should not be higher than 105°F and the detergent must have a pH factor between 6 and 10.5. The washing machine g-force must not exceed 100g for all gear.



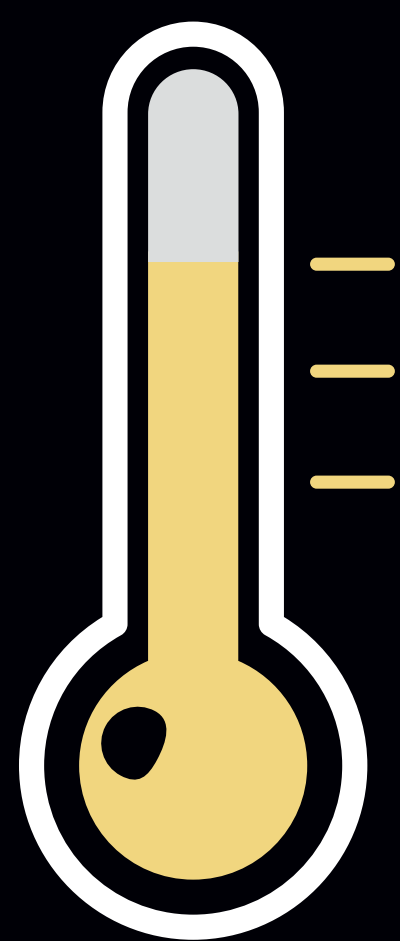
4. RE-INSPECT

Once the clothing has been washed, inspect it again. If the gear is not clean, repeat Step 3.



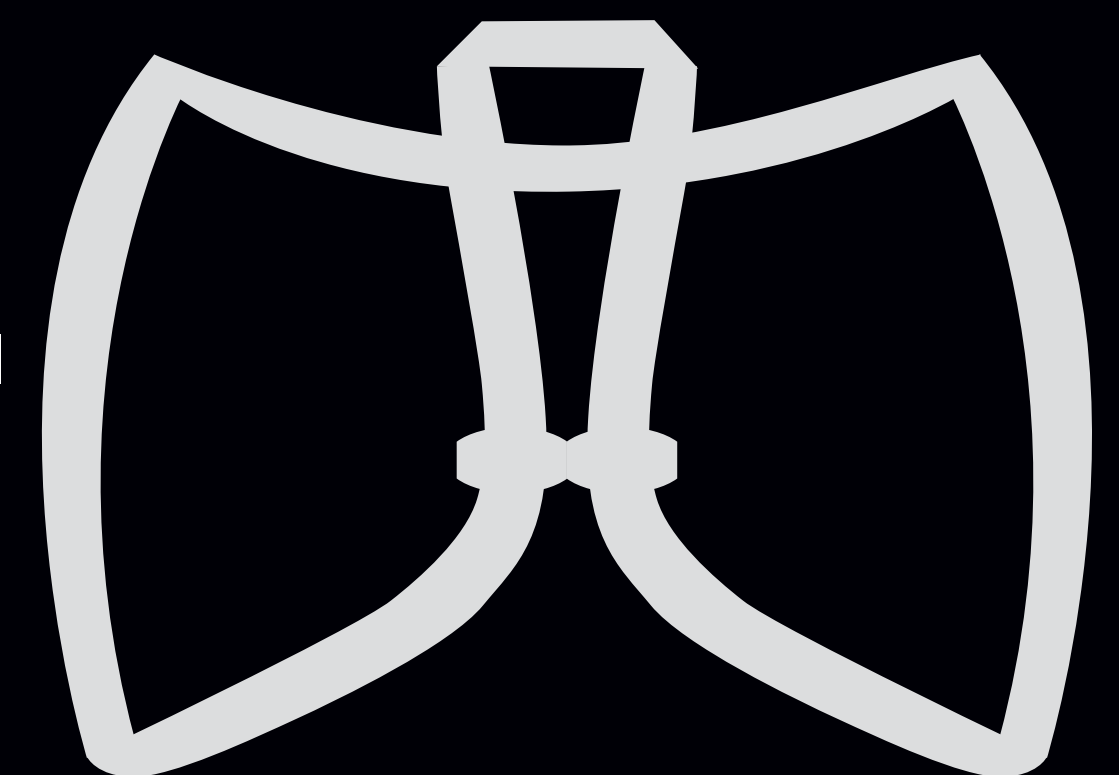
5. DRYING

Dry the gear in an area with good ventilation or in a drying cabinet; never dry in direct sunlight, which can degrade the high-temperature fabrics. When machine drying, fasten all closures and use a no-heat or air-dry option. Do not allow the area used for drying to exceed 105°F.



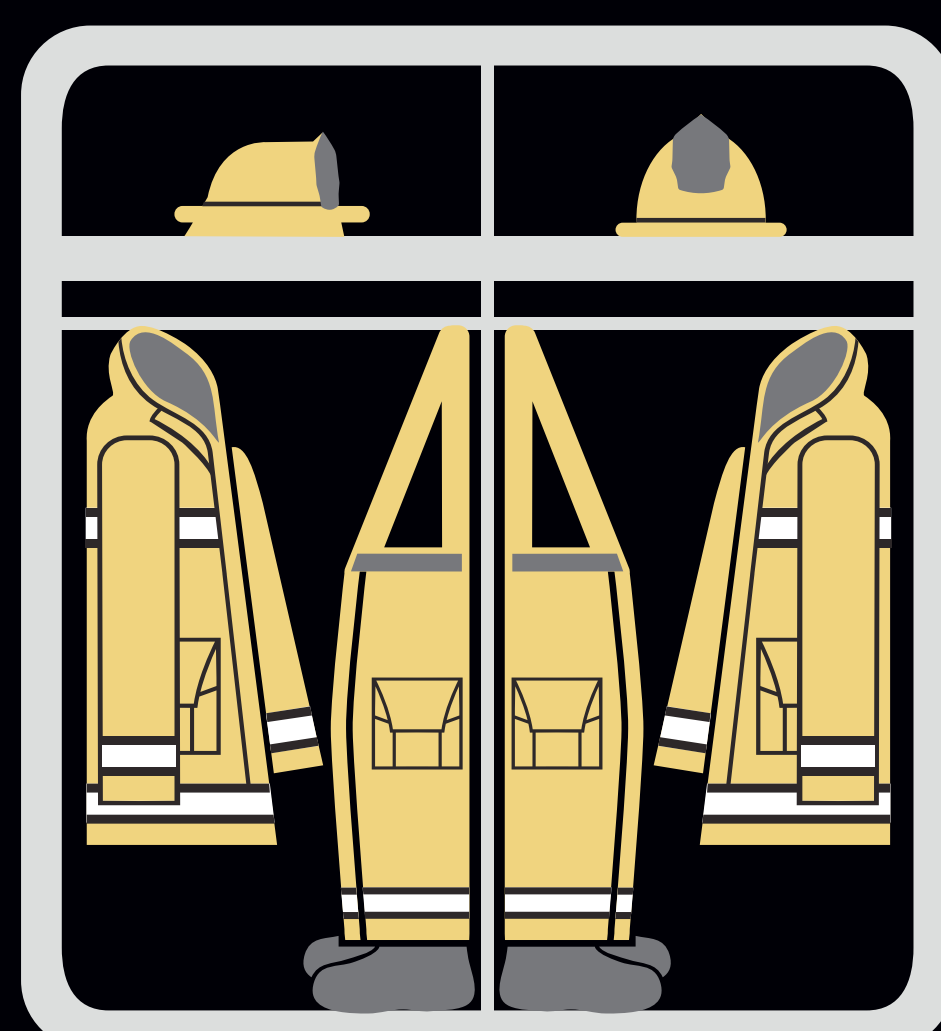
6. REASSEMBLE

When the gear is fully dry, follow the manufacturer’s instructions to reinstall the drag rescue device in the jacket and to insert the liners into the outer shells. Check that all of the closures are properly secure and that the drag rescue device is properly installed.



7. STORAGE

Keep clean gear in a dry, well-ventilated area out of direct sunlight and away from indoor light sources; they also produce harmful UV rays. Do not store in extreme hot or cold temperatures, nor in airtight containers. This will keep the materials that make up the PPE from degrading while being stored.



ONLINE RESOURCES

MSAfire.com/Globe | PPE101.com | NFPA.org

WHEN YOU GO IN, WE GO IN WITH YOU.