

Los Angeles City Fire Department

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WILDLAND FIRE FIGHTING PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

The Los Angeles Fire Department faces many different types of emergency incidents on a daily basis. Included in these types of incidents are structure and brush/grass fires (Wildland Fires). In evaluating the different hazards and stresses that these fires pose for the firefighter, the Department will be providing additional protective clothing and equipment for members to better face the challenges created by the Urban/Wildland Environment.

Presently, the Department provides members with a fully encapsulating protective clothing system. Included in this system are a firefighting helmet, firefighting hood, turnout coat, turnout pants, turnout boots, safety boots, gloves, goggles, and a breathing apparatus. When this system is worn at structure fires, it provides a superior level of personal protection from external heat sources. When worn at a brush/grass (Wildland) fire, this system may lead to the number one firefighting injury, that of excessive internal heat stress.

The goal of the Department is to provide a protective clothing system for (Wildland) fires that will protect members **for normal exposure limits**, (thermal protection against external heat sources while not inducing an extraordinary internal heat stress load) and provide an emergency fire shelter for **immediate use for severe exposure situations where serious injury or death may result**.

In order to meet the two different challenges posed by these types of fires (structure and wildland) and be properly protected for either situation the Department intends to provide the following additional equipment as specifications and funds become available:

1. Face/neck Shroud-

Attaches to the firefighting helmet via Velcro strips. This shroud shall be worn when dispatched to a reported brush/grass (Wildland) fire. The shroud is **not** to replace the firefighting hood at structure fires. Members may wear the hood in lieu of the shroud at brush/grass (Wildland) fires.

2. Lightweight Overpant-

The lightweight yellow Nomex overpant shall be worn **over** the station work uniform/standard uniform pants when dispatched to a brush/grass (Wildland) fire. These overpants are **not** designed to be worn without a uniform pant or during structure or vehicle firefighting.

**3. Web Belt/Canteen-
Belt Pack
Fire Shelter**

This equipment will be provided for every position in fire suppression. Members shall don prior to suppression activities. All members must have a fire shelter on their bodies **immediately** available for emergency use.

4. Field Pack-

One firefighter field pack will be assigned to every fire apparatus. This pack will be worn at the discretion of the company commander. The component design allows for many versatile uses. (for example: carrying equipment, fittings, extra clothing, etc.) At a minimum, the web belt portion with canteen and fire shelter **must** be worn.

The above listed equipment shall be worn in conjunction with the brush jacket, gloves, goggles and safety or turnout boots when companies are dispatched to brush/grass (Wildland) fires. This additional equipment is being provided to augment the concept of "**layering**" while at the same time not add to the heat stress factor. In a further application of the "**layering**" concept, members are encouraged to wear 100% cotton long-sleeve T-shirts during brush and grass (Wildland) fire fighting operations. Research has shown that in addition to protecting the lower arms it aids in the cooling effect of one's body during firefighting operations.

Members must understand that no single system will provide 100% protection at all times. The addition of this new equipment will enhance the firefighters' physically demanding job by providing ease of movement and the ability to work long hours without undue buildup of body heat that saps strength and endurance. Providing this addition to the Department's protective clothing/equipment will accomplish this goal.

Members are reminded that they still maintain the option of wearing their full protective clothing/equipment whenever they deem a need for increased protection.