

**WAC 296-305-02004 Protection ensemble for structural firefighting. (1) Face and eye protection.**

(a) Face and eye protection shall be provided for and used by firefighters engaged in fire suppression and other operations involving hazards to the eye and face at all times when the face isn't protected by the full facepiece of the SCBA. Primary face and eye protection appropriate for a given specific hazard must be provided for, and used by, members exposed to that specific hazard. Such primary face and eye protection must meet the requirements of the 2003 edition of ANSI Z87.1.

(b) Persons whose vision requires the use of corrective lenses in spectacles, and who are required by this standard to wear eye protection, must wear goggles or spectacles of one of the following types:

(i) Spectacles with protective lenses that provide optical correction.

(ii) Goggles that can be worn over corrective spectacles without disturbing the adjustment of the spectacles.

(iii) Goggles that incorporate corrective lenses mounted behind the protective lens.

(c) When limitations or precautions are indicated by the manufacturer, they must be transmitted to the user and care taken to see such limitations and precautions are strictly observed.

(d) Care, use and maintenance for any type of eye or face protection must follow the manufacturer's suggested recommendations.

(e) Goggles must be inspected, cleaned and disinfected prior to being reissued to other employees.

(f) Helmet face shields must meet the requirements of the 2000 edition of NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Fire Fighting.

**Note:** The helmet face shield alone doesn't always provide adequate eye protection against flying particles, splash, gases and vapors. For known eye hazards, such as cutting with power saws, chopping, drilling and using extrication equipment, the face shield should be worn with additional eye protection.

(g) For firefighters that don't have a helmet face shield, flexible or cushioned fitting goggles must be provided.

(h) Goggles must consist of a wholly flexible frame, forming a lens holder or a rigid frame with integral lens or lenses, having a separate, cushioned fitting surface on the full periphery of the facial contact area.

(i) Materials used must be chemical-resistant, nontoxic, nonirritating and slow burning.

(ii) There must be a positive means of support on the face, such as an adjustable headband of suitable material or other appropriate means of support to retain the frame comfortably and snugly in front of the eyes.

**(2) Hearing protection.** Fire departments must address noise issues as required by chapter 296-817 WAC, Hearing loss prevention (noise).

**Note:** Although noise levels may exceed the 115 dBA ceiling limit for noise exposures during structural firefighting activities, hearing protection that will survive these conditions and not interfere with other essential PPE may not always be available. Fire departments must consider daily noise exposures and exposures to noise outside direct firefighting activities when selecting hearing protection and may use less protection during direct fire suppression when adequate hearing protection isn't technically feasible.

**(3) Hand protection.**

(a) Firefighters' gloves must, when worn with turnout clothing, provide protection to the wrist area. In turnout clothing where wristlet protection isn't provided firefighters' gloves must be tight-fitting at the top.

(b) Fire departments must establish written policy and procedure for the care, use, cleaning, replacement or retirement criteria for gloves issued.

(c) Firefighters' gloves used during structural firefighting operations including rescue of victims from fires or emergency medical operations where sharp or rough surfaces are likely to be encountered must meet the requirements of the 2000 edition of NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Fire Fighting.

**Notes:**

1. Firefighters' gloves aren't designed to provide protection against all environments. For gloves needed to fulfill a specific requirement see that specific section of this chapter. It is the intent of this section to provide protection from intrusion through the glove by certain chemicals and from bloodborne pathogens. Consult the glove manufacturers' recommendations.
2. Firefighters' hands should be sized for compliance using the sizing chart specified in the 2000 edition of NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Fire Fighting.

(4) **Body protection.** Body protection must be coordinated with torso, hand, head, foot, respiratory, and face protection as outlined in WAC 296-305-02001 through 296-305-02019 and 296-305-04001.

(5) **Foot protection.**

(a) Protective footwear purchased after January 1, 2014, must comply with the 2007 or later edition of NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Fire Fighting.

(b) Fire departments must establish written policies and procedures on the use, maintenance, and retirement criteria for footwear in conjunction with the manufacturer's recommendations.

**Note:** Fire departments should establish cleaning and drying instructions for protective footwear, including applicable warnings regarding detergents, soaps, cleaning additives and bleaches.

(c) Firefighter footwear may be resoled, but upon resoling the footwear must meet the requirements specified in this section.

(6) **Head protection.** Firefighters who engage in or are exposed to the hazards of structural firefighting must be provided with and use helmets that meet, as a minimum, the requirements of the 1987 edition of NFPA 1972, Standard on Helmets for Structural Fire Fighting.

(a) Helmets purchased after January 1, 2014, must comply with the 2007 or later edition of NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensemble for Structural Fire Fighting.

(b) Fire departments must establish a written policy and procedure for the care, use, maintenance and retirement criteria for helmets, following the manufacturer's recommendations.

(c) Helmet accessories must not interfere with the function of the helmet or its parts, and must not degrade the helmet's performance.

(d) Firefighters must follow the manufacturer's recommendations regarding inspection, cleaning, painting, marking, and storage of helmets.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 18-22-116, § 296-305-02004, filed 11/6/18, effective 12/7/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and 29 C.F.R. 1910.156, Fire brigades. WSR 13-05-070, § 296-305-02004, filed 2/19/13, effective 1/1/14.]