

	BEDFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & RESCUE Standard Operating Guideline	
	Discipline: Administration	DATE: June 1, 2022
	Reference Number: F/R-03	
	APPROVED BY: Chief Janet Blankenship	
	SUBJECT: Safety Guidelines	

Purpose

To develop, approve, and authorize a comprehensive countywide standard operating guideline that will provide direction to all county fire and emergency medical services agencies in regard to the wearing of appropriate reflective safety apparel, the use of hearing protection, and seatbelt requirement for all Fire & Rescue personnel.

Scope

This SOG applies to all responses under the authority of the Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue.

Procedures

Reflective safety vests are issued to all county fire and emergency medical services agencies. Per the **Worker Visibility Rule (23 CFR 634)** published in the Federal Register and in effect on November 24th, 2008, mandates that anyone working in the right-of-way of a federal highway must be wearing high visibility clothing that meets the requirements of ANSI/ISEA 107: 2004 edition class 2 or 3. This requirement will apply to all emergency responders.

Each individual Fire and Rescue Department will provide hearing protection when necessary. This may include hearing protection provided for each member or providing hearing protection in various areas or environments for members to utilize. Areas or tasks where hearing protection may be needed include, but are not limited to, riding apparatus, operating power equipment, maintenance areas, etc. All personnel shall utilize hearing protection when noise levels exceed, or could exceed, 85 dB (TWA-time weighted average).

Each Fire and Rescue Department issues hearing protection to reduce ambient noise levels. Hearing protection shall be used according to manufacturer’s instructions. Each member is expected to maintain hearing protection and have it available when needed.

Each Fire and Rescue Department will provide, when necessary, hearing protection for vehicles and apparatus in the form of intercom system/ear protectors, or other means to provide hearing protection while riding on the apparatus. Where hearing protection is provided on the apparatus it shall be utilized by members in each position where the hearing protection is provided, unless otherwise prohibited by traffic regulations. This includes both non-emergency and emergency conditions when riding on the apparatus. If the apparatus does not have hearing protection provided, members shall utilize their other hearing protection methods.

Hearing protection shall not be used in situations where the use of such protective equipment would create another or additional hazard to the user. It should be noted that earmuff style devices, unless specifically designed to not do so, may interfere with the use of helmets, and foam type, rubber based ear plugs may melt at higher temperatures.

Requirements

1. In order to provide greater safety and visibility for all Bedford County Fire Department and Rescue Squad agencies, florescent safety vests or turnout gear with standard reflective striping will be worn during incidents that require responders to be in *any* proximity to any roadway, parking lot, or environment where vehicles travel.
2. Safety vests utilized must meet minimum requirements set forth by OSHA, ANSI, and VDOT.

All Fire and Rescue personnel are **required** to wear seatbelts anytime a vehicle/apparatus is in operation.

Responsibilities

1. Company Officers as well as Firefighters and Emergency Medical Responders are responsible to make sure that they are attired properly to ensure high visibility and identity as an emergency responder.
2. The Incident Commander and/or a designated Safety Officer shall determine the appropriate safety apparel and are responsible for ensuring that all personnel are dressed accordingly.
3. Personnel operating within the Incident Command System and assigned to Command Staff or Sector positions are to be attired in the proper florescent ICS vest and are not required to wear the florescent safety vest.

Enforcement

It is the responsibility of each agency under the direction of Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue to implement and enforce the policy to promote safe operations on any incident.