NFPA 1975

Standard on Station/Work Uniforms for Fire and Emergency Services

2004 Edition

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NFPA 1975

Standard on

Station/Work Uniforms for Fire and Emergency Services

2004 Edition

This edition of NFPA 1975, *Standard on Station/Work Uniforms for Fire and Emergency Services*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Special Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment, released by the Technical Correlating Committee on Fire and Emergency Services Protective Clothing and Equipment, and acted on by NFPA at its November Association Technical Meeting held November 15–19, 2003, in Reno, NV. It was issued by the Standards Council on January 16, 2004, with an effective date of February 5, 2004, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 1975 was approved as an American National Standard on January 16, 2004.

Origin and Development of NFPA 1975

The Technical Committee on Protective Equipment for Fire Fighters began work on NFPA 1975 in 1982 in response to requests from the fire service to establish requirements for flame-resistant station uniform clothing. The first edition was acted on by the membership of the Association at the 1985 Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, and was issued with an effective date of June 26, 1985.

Following the 1985 edition, the name of the technical committee was changed to the Technical Committee on Fire Service Protective Clothing and Equipment. Under the direction of that technical committee, a subcommittee was formed to address station/work uniform concerns. The Subcommittee on Station/Work Uniforms began revision of the 1985 edition of NFPA 1975 in 1988, and the second edition was acted on by the membership of the Association at the 1990 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, and was issued with an effective date of August 17, 1990.

The Subcommittee on Station/Work Uniforms began an early revision (four-year cycle) of the 1990 edition of NFPA 1975 in December 1991. During 1993, the NFPA restructured the manner in which committees were organized, and all standing subcommittees were eliminated. Within the Technical Committee on Fire Service Protective Clothing and Equipment, the former standing subcommittees were reorganized as task groups to address specific technical issues, and the technical committee assumed the entire responsibility for NFPA 1975.

The third edition of NFPA 1975 encompassed revised scope and purpose sections to more clearly identify what a station/work uniform is intended to be and that, because of the limited degree of protection it affords, it is not, of itself, a primary protective garment. However, a station/work uniform garment should not cause or contribute to injury from an unexpected thermal exposure. The concept of "dual-purpose" station/work uniform garments that also are designed and certified as primary protective garments was introduced for situations including, but not limited to, wildland fire fighting or emergency medical services. Revisions to certain definitions also strengthened these areas. A new thermal shrinkage test for fabrics was added to the requirements. An increase of the pre-test conditioning by either washing or dry-cleaning was added to assure that treated flame-resistant fabrics will retain their flame-resistant characteristics over the expected life of the garment. The third edition was acted on by the membership of the Association at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California, on May 18, 1994, and was issued with an effective date of August 5, 1994.

In 1995, the NFPA Standards Council reorganized the entire project for fire service protective clothing and equipment. The former single Technical Committee on Fire Service Protective Clothing and Equipment was disbanded and a new Project on Fire and Emergency Services Protective Clothing and Equipment with a Technical Correlating Committee and eight technical committees operating within it was established. The responsibility for NFPA 1975 was assigned to the new Technical Committee on Special Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment.

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The fourth edition included a major change whereby flame resistant garments were no longer required exclusively; garments were allowed to be made either from flame resistant fabrics or from cotton or wool fabrics. Flame resistance performance and testing was permitted to be specified by the purchaser where desired and would be above the minimum requirements. The heat resistance and thermal shrinkage resistance requirements were retained. The heat resistance and thermal shrinkage resistance performance requirements were combined into a single requirement. The chapter on certification was reformatted by moving product labels and user information into a new Chapter 3. A new Chapter 4 on design requirements was also added.

The 2004 edition of NFPA 1975 once again addresses the basic protection offered by these garments in non-emergency situations and the "user friendliness" of station/work uniform fabrics. This fifth edition includes changes that will distinguish between thermally stable materials and materials that could potentially melt onto skin under conditions of accidental flame or high heat exposure, and provides for verification and certification of station/work uniforms constructed from flame resistant fabrics.

During the adoption process of the 1999 edition (fourth edition) of NFPA 1975, a floor amendment at the 1998 NFPA Fall Meeting removed the requirements for flame resistant fabrics and the specified flame resistance test, and instead permitted nominally 100 percent cotton or nominally 100 percent wool fabrics to be used. This led to fabric thermal stability problems, especially with wool fabrics but also with cotton fabrics that could cause or contribute to injury of the wearer. Because of the very nature of emergency services, emergency services personnel can be exposed to unknown and unexpected ignition sources during non-emergency situations when primary protective clothing is not being worn. Also, when emergency services personnel are wearing station/work uniforms constructed from these fabrics under primary protective clothing, the possibility of degradation of these fabrics exists and can lead to more severe injury for the wearer.

In response to these problems, the Technical Committee on Special Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment incorporated new thermal stability performance requirements and a new thermal stability test in the fifth edition of NFPA 1975. In addition, the heat and thermal shrinkage resistance performance requirements and test method in the 1999 edition are retained. The Committee has also included *optional* criteria so that organizations that specify flame-resistant fabrics for station/work uniforms can include reference to this optional requirement and test in purchase specifications so that the actual flame resistance can be verified and certified as compliant. This option will also apply to manufacturers who claim that flame-resistant textiles are used in the construction of the station/work uniform. Additional product labeling provides confirmation of compliance with the standard. These changes define acceptable fabrics for station/work uniforms and distinguish between materials that could potentially melt onto skin under conditions of accidental flame or high heat exposure and those that provide thermal stability.

The 2004 edition (fifth edition) has been reformatted into the new style for all NFPA codes and standards and, therefore, the chapter titles and numbering, as well as paragraph numbering, have changed.

In Memoriam, 11 September 2001

We pay tribute to the 343 members of FDNY who gave their lives to save civilian victims on 11 September 2001, at the World Trade Center. They are true American heroes in death, but they were also American heroes in life. We will keep them in our memory and in our hearts. They are the embodiment of courage, bravery, and dedication. May they rest in peace.

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NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on the design, performance, testing, and certification of protective clothing and protective equipment manufactured for fire and emergency services organizations and personnel, to protect against exposures encountered during emergency incident operations. This Committee shall also have the primary responsibility for documents on the selection, care, and maintenance of such protective clothing and protective equipment by fire and emergency services organizations and personnel.

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Bruce W. Teele, NFPA Staff Liaison

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NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on special operations protective clothing and protective equipment, except respiratory equipment, that provides hand, foot, torso, limb, head, and interface protection for fire fighters and other emergency services responders during incidents involving special operations functions including, but not limited to, structural collapse, trench rescue, confined space entry, urban search and rescue, high angle/mountain rescue, vehicular extraction, swift water or flooding rescue, contaminated water diving, and air operations. This committee shall also have primary responsibility for documents on station/work uniform garments that are not of themselves primary protective garments but can be combined with a primary protective garment to serve dual or multiple functions. Additionally, this committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on the selection, care, and maintenance of special operations protective clothing and equipment by fire and emergency services organizations and personnel.

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NOTICE: An asterisk (*) following the number or letter designating a paragraph indicates that explanatory material on the paragraph can be found in Annex A.

Information on referenced publications can be found in Chapter 2 and Annex C.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1 Scope.

1.1.1 This standard shall specify requirements for the design, performance, testing, and certification of nonprimary protective station/work uniforms and the individual garments comprising station/work uniforms.

1.1.2 This standard shall also specify requirements for thermally stable textiles used in the construction of station/work uniforms.

1.1.3 This standard shall also specify optional requirements where flame resistant textiles are specified or used in construction of station/work uniforms.

1.1.4 This standard shall not specify requirements for clothing that is intended to provide primary protection from given hazard exposures.

1.1.5* Certification of station/work uniforms to the requirements of this standard shall not preclude certification to additional appropriate standards for primary protective clothing where the clothing meets all requirements of each standard.

1.1.6 Nothing herein shall restrict any jurisdiction or manufacturer from exceeding these minimum requirements.

1.2 Purpose.

1.2.1 The purpose of this standard shall be to provide fire and emergency services personnel with station/work uniforms that will not contribute to burn injury severity.

1.2.1.1 To achieve this purpose, this standard shall establish minimum requirements for thermally stable textiles that will not rapidly deteriorate, melt, shrink, or adhere to the wearer's skin, causing greater, more severe burn injuries.

1.2.1.2 This standard shall also provide optional flame resistance requirements and tests to verify the flame resistance of textiles where the authority having jurisdiction specifies the use of flame resistance textiles for the construction of station/work uniforms, or where the manufacturer represents station/work uniform textiles as flame resistant.

1.2.2 Controlled laboratory tests used to determine compliance with the performance requirements of this standard shall not be deemed as establishing performance levels for all situations to which fire and emergency services personnel might be exposed.

1.2.3* This standard shall not be intended to serve as a detailed manufacturing or purchasing specification but shall be permitted to be referenced in purchase specifications as minimum requirements.

1.3 Application.

1.3.1 This standard shall apply to the manufacture and certification of new station/work uniforms and the individual garments comprising station/work uniforms.

1.3.2 This standard shall apply to nonprimary protective garments that comprise station/work uniforms.

1.3.3* This standard alone shall not apply to clothing that is intended to provide primary protection from given hazard exposures.

1.3.4 This edition of NFPA 1975 shall not apply to any station/work uniforms manufactured to previous editions of this standard.

1.3.5 This standard shall not apply to any station/work uniforms manufactured to the requirements of any other organization's standards.

1.3.6 This standard shall not apply to the use of station/work uniforms; such use requirements are specified in NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program.*

1.3.7 The requirements of this standard shall not apply to accessories that might be attached to any station/work uniforms unless specifically addressed herein.

1.4 Units.

1.4.1 In this standard, values for measurement are followed by an equivalent in parentheses, but only the first stated value shall be regarded as the requirement.

1.4.2 Equivalent values in parentheses shall not be considered as the requirement as these values might be approximate.

Chapter 2 Referenced Publications

2.1 General. The documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this standard and shall be considered part of the requirements of this document.

2.2 NFPA Publication. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471.

NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program,* 2002 edition.

2.3 Other Publications.

2.3.1 AATCC Publications. American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, P.O. Box 12215, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

AATCC 135, *Dimensional Changes in Automatic Home Laundering of Woven and Knit Fabrics,* 2001.

AATCC 158, *Dimensional Changes in Dry-Cleaning in Perchloroethylene: Machine Method,* 2000.

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