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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** | | |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** | |
| **SOG Number:** | |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** | | |

**Decontamination Wipes**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Purpose:**

Decontamination wipes are specifically designed to remove soot and contamination from vulnerable skin areas which were exposed to fire by-products. The use of decontamination wipes are to be used on all affected areas of the skin immediately after exposure, including face, jaw angle, neck throat and groin. They can be used to remove potentially carcinogenic debris from protective equipment.

**Scope:**

This applies to all personnel who have been exposed to carcinogenic materials at an incident or during training.

**Procedure:**

Decontamination wipes are specifically designed to help remove carcinogens and contaminants from the skin. Utilizing decontamination wipes as soon as possible can help decrease dose and duration of exposure to contaminants and may reduce the risk of cancer. The following decontamination procedures can be used:

* All Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) should remain on
* A gross contamination station should be utilized to remove contaminates from PPE while on scene
* Water should be sprayed in a top down method to remove contaminates from PPE
* If available a 20” long handled scrub brush or other type of brush should be used to gently clean PPE
* If available, a PPE detergent should be use to clean PPE with gong brush
* Once gross decon of PPE is completed, remove helmet and SCBA
* Remove gloves
* Select the appropriate sized Decontamination Wipes for skin decontamination
* Clean hands with Decontamination Wipes
* Apply Nitrile of similar type of gloves to prevent cross-contamination or secondary exposure
* Use decontamination wipes to clean any exposed skin that is contaminated or may have been contaminated, such as face, ears, jaw, neck, throat, arms, underarms and wrists
* Remove bunker pants and boots, use care to prevent recontamination or secondary exposure
* Use decontamination wipes to clean any exposed skin that is contaminated of may have been contaminated, such as legs, ankles and feet
* Dispose of used wipes and gloves properly
* Prevent recontamination or secondary exposure by preventing contact with contaminates or contaminated products
* Launder PPE and any contaminated uniforms or clothing
* Take a shower as soon as possible to further remove contaminates
* All equipment including SCBA, hand tools, ladders, etc., should be cleaned with an approved cleaner to prevent secondary exposure

Multiple decontamination wipes may be needed for decontamination depending on the size selected. Decontamination wipes are a single use product that should be discarded properly after use.

For best practices decontamination wipes should be used to remove as much soot as possible from the face, ears, neck, jaw, throat, arms, underarms, wrists, hands and all other contaminated areas while still on scene.

“Baby Wipes” should **NOT** be used as a replacement for fire service decontamination wipes. Decontamination wipes are:

* Extra-large – more than 5x larger than baby wipes
* MUCH thicker than baby wipes and won’t shred, rear or ball up like most baby wipes
* Individually packed so they won’t dry out, have a multi-year shelf life
* Specifically designed to remove soot. Soot is a greasy, dirty, oily, sticky hydrocarbon. Baby wipes are not formulated to clean this. Decontamination wipes use micellar water, which has been used a makeup remover for decades. Micellar water gently breaks the bond between the skin and the soot, lifting it out of the pores and trapping it in the fabric of the wipe. I guarantee you baby wipes do not.

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**

Responder Wipes Decontamination Instructions

2014 Edgewater Drive, Suite 148

Orlando, FL 32804

877-WIPEOFF

www.responderwipes.com