
Ames Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines

Book: 3 – Emergency Operations
Section: II – Fire Company Operations
Chapter: 3 – **Safety Vests**

Date Approved: 01-19-2009 Revision No.: New Approved by: 

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the required personal protective apparel to be worn by Ames Fire Department members when working at incidents that place responders in or near moving traffic.

POLICY

Effective November 24, 2008 a new federal regulation (Code of Federal Regulations Title 23 Part 634 – Worker Visibility) went into effect mandating that anyone working in the right-of-way of federal-aid highways must be wearing high-visibility safety apparel. In efforts to decrease the likelihood of fatalities or injuries, reflective-compliant vests are required to be worn by emergency responders during incidents and/or when exposure to the hazards of moving traffic are present for personnel working on foot (i.e., vehicle collisions/injury crashes, fluid spills, dangerous conditions, vehicle fires, or when shoveling snow from around fire hydrants).

PROCEDURE

When the nature of the incident requires AFD members to work in traffic right-of-ways, the following personal protective apparel shall be worn:

- ANSI 107-compliant Class II vest, Class III Highway Safety garment, or ANSI 207 Public Safety vest
 - If a member prefers to wear a structural turnout coat due to inclement weather (i.e., rain, cold, snow) or is required to wear structural turnout gear due to duties assigned at the incident scene, the ANSI highway safety vest must be donned over the turnout coat.
 - Turnout coats are not acceptable as high-visibility highway safety apparel when donned without the ANSI-compliant vest on the outside of the coat.

Safety Vest Exemptions

Some unique incident types may be encountered where wearing a vest may be impractical. Under these limited situations, the requirement for donning ANSI-compliant vests by AFD members is exempted:

- When the hazard area, or “hot-zone,” is protected from the hazards of moving traffic (i.e., apparatus blocking, lane closures).
- ANSI-compliant Highway Safety vest need not be worn when a member is required to:
 - Don structural PPE and SCBA to work in close proximity to a source of heat, such as during suppression of a vehicle fire.

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- Don hazardous material personal protective equipment to avoid potential exposure to chemicals or other contaminants.
- Don technical rescue PPE and/or equipment for a technical rescue incident (i.e., extrication, high or low-angle rope rescue, swift water rescue).
- Once complete with hot zone activities, members should then don ANSI-compliant vests

REFERENCES

Federal Highway Administration (2008), *Worker Visibility*, Code of Federal Regulations 23 CFR Part 634.

DOT Federal Highway Administration (Friday, November 24, 2006). Federal Register. (Vol. 71, No. 226, pp. 67792-67800).