

PLANNING



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APPARATUS DESIGN

Apparatus should be designed with careful thought given to biological and chemical contamination and the potential for cross-contamination. The cab of the apparatus should be kept free of toxins, both on the hard and soft surfaces as well as in the air.

- SCBAs and turnouts should have their own compartment away from the cab. SCBAs that are designed into the seat also should come with provisions for decontamination and cleaning prior to placing back into the seat after a fire.
- All seat material should be of vinyl or other material to reduce absorption of toxins and for easy cleaning.
- Apparatus can be adapted to have a warm-water outlet, which provides a personal washing station. Prior to 2016, NFPA 1901 required a heat exchanger for the engine coolant; most apparatus manufacturers accomplish this with water from the tank through a heat exchanger. A simple diverter valve to the pump panel can create a warm-water outlet for a personal hand-washing station.
- All flooring should be designed with a waterproof material that can be washed with a hose and scrubbed out.
- Exhaust pipes can be designed to exit where fire fighters are least affected when opening cabinets and accessing pump panel controls.
- Prepackaged water bottles carried on apparatus for personnel to rehydrate are a handy solution. A reusable water cooler container can be safely utilized, provided a timely cleaning and disinfecting plan is in place.
- All interior material used in the cab should be easily cleaned and designed to repel moisture, yet durable enough to be cleaned daily or after each call with disinfecting agents, soap and water. Do not use cloth for the apparatus seat materials.
- Contaminated equipment (SCBAs, fire hose, TICs, etc.) should not be allowed in the cab of the apparatus until the equipment has been properly decontaminated. This may involve arranging transportation of the contaminated equipment from the incident to the fire station for proper decontamination.
- As a best practice, groceries should not be routinely transported in fire department apparatus due to potential cross-contamination. Because this is a common practice while working 24-hour shifts, a designated cooler or insulated zippered container can be used to minimize cross-contamination. Groceries also can be placed in designated contaminant-free compartments.



APPARATUS TURNOUT STORAGE

All apparatus should have a designated turnout compartment separate from the cab.

- Turnouts, including helmets, should not be routinely allowed in the cab of the apparatus, with the exception of responding to emergencies or participating in trainings.
- No contaminated turnouts should be allowed in any apparatus cab.
- After an incident or training that involves contaminants, all turnouts should be grossly decontaminated on scene, encapsulated in a designated disposable bag, and transported to a fire station or an ISP for proper cleaning.

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