

BULLETIN

NO.: 09-005

DATE: January 9, 2009

TO: All Personnel

FROM: Brian Fennessy, Deputy Chief, Director of Operations  
Lorraine Hutchinson, Deputy Chief, Director of Logistics

SUBJECT: High Visibility Vests

DISPOSITION: Read/Post/Retain until Incorporated into the Operations Manual

<b>A</b>	
<b>B</b>	
<b>C</b>	

In order to comply with a recently passed federal regulation, all SDFD personnel will be issued a High Visibility Vest.

Federal regulation C.F.R. Part 634 – Worker Visibility (High-Visibility Vests), requires all workers within the right-of-way of a federal-aid highway to wear an ANSI 107 (2004) Class 2 or 3 high-visibility vest. All first responders working within the right of way of a federal-aid highway are covered by the new rule. To meet this requirement, all personnel will be issued a high-visibility vest, which will be worn on all freeway incidents.

The Logistics Division in cooperation with the Operations Shift Commanders is coordinating the distribution of the high visibility vests. All Operations Personnel will be issued one high visibility vest and it is their responsibility to safeguard, and maintain this vest as they would any other department issued PPE. The high visibility vests come in two sizes and should allow the wearer to don over their turnout coat. Personnel with a turnout coat size equal to or less than size 42 will be issued a Medium - 2X vest. Personnel with a turnout coat size greater than 42 would be issued a 3X-5X vest.

An Operations Manual Revision, which will address department procedures regarding high visibility vests, is currently in the approval process and will distributed to the workforce in the near future. In the interim, all personnel shall operate under the following guidelines:

1. All personnel responding to any freeway emergency will be required to wear a high visibility vest, in addition to other appropriate PPE.
2. In consideration of competing OSHA regulations regarding firefighting PPE requirements, the following exceptions to wearing a high visibility vest will be allowed:
  - a. Crew members **actively** engaged in firefighting
  - b. Crew members **actively** involved in a vehicle extrication
  - c. Crew members **actively** involved in the mitigation of a hazardous materials incident

- d. Any time the Incident Commander determines that use of the vest may create a safety issue for incident personnel.
3. On-scene personnel not directly exposed to fire, flame, excessive heat or hazardous materials ARE expected to wear high-visibility vests including pump operators, support personnel, command officers etc.
4. Company officers will be held strictly accountable to ensure all assigned personnel are wearing the proper PPE.

Adding high visibility vests to our existing PPE is one of several proactive strategies designed to protect firefighters when working on freeways and roads. Continued training on freeway incident safety, proper placement of apparatus at freeway incidents and the proper use of other traffic control devices such as flares and traffic cones will ensure that *“everyone goes home”*.

For more information pertaining to firefighter safety while assigned to freeway and highway emergencies, all personnel are encouraged to review the following link:

[http://firefighterclosecalls.com/cc\\_apparatus.php](http://firefighterclosecalls.com/cc_apparatus.php)

Questions regarding high visibility safety vests should be addressed through your chain of command. Thank you for your continued support.