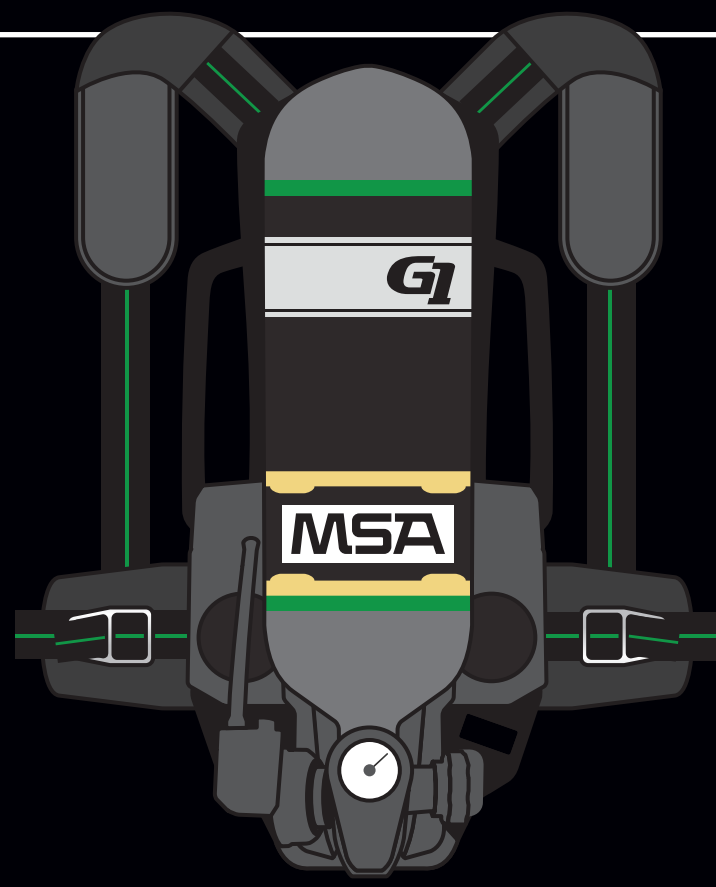


7 Steps to Clean Firefighting SCBA



The entire fire service industry recognizes that soiled or contaminated protective gear can expose firefighters to toxic substances, spread communicable disease, absorb heat, conduct electricity, and can be flammable. In short, clean PPE can help keep you safe.

NFPA 1851 recommends the user to evaluate PPE after each use to determine the appropriate cleaning level. This includes instructions for cleaning at the scene and an advanced cleaning at least once a year or whenever on-scene cleaning is not sufficient. Here are seven steps to assist in cleaning your SCBA.

1. CLEAN BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE SCENE

Remain on air (if possible) during on-scene cleaning. Gently brush or lightly sponge off SCBA with mild soap/water solution to remove the large, gross contaminants following overhaul and rinse with a low pressure hose. This on-scene cleaning greatly reduces the amount of particles you take into the rig and the firehouse bay. If an on-scene cleaning doesn't do the job, the SCBA requires an advanced cleaning.



NOTE: Step 1 constitutes an on-scene cleaning that should be done at the scene. Steps 2 through 7 constitute an advanced cleaning, done at least once a year or when on-scene cleaning is not sufficient.

2. INSPECT

Wear exam gloves and eye protection during this process. Note any physical damage that will need to be addressed before the SCBA is returned to service.



3. WASH

For normal cleaning, use a soft sponge or bristle brush with warm water to remove surface dirt on the exterior of the SCBA, and then rinse thoroughly. Be sure to clean the following components of the SCBA, 1. Harness, including straps and buckles, 2. Carrier, including band and latch assembly, 3. Cylinder, including handwheel and gauge, 4. Pressure reducer, including bell and coupling connection, and 5. Control, Power, Battery, and Speaker Modules.



4. RE-INSPECT

Once the SCBA has been through the cleaning process, inspect again and if not clean, repeat Step 3.



5. DRYING

Dry the SCBA in an area with good ventilation; never dry in direct sunlight. SCBA should never be machine dried using equipment that produces mechanical action by tumbling or agitation. It is imperative that the SCBA be allowed to thoroughly dry before returning to service.



6. STORAGE

Store clean SCBA in a dry, well-ventilated area out of direct sunlight and away from indoor light sources, which can also produce harmful UV rays. Do not store in extreme hot or cold temperatures.



7. INSPECTION & TESTING

Remember to perform all inspection and functional testing of the SCBA before returning the unit to service.



ONLINE RESOURCES

MSAfire.com | PPE101.com | NFPA.org

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