



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Fire & Aviation Directorate

Operations Alert



No. 2020-001

Date: March 24, 2020

Subject: Social Distance and Hygiene Tips for Firefighters

Review and utilize the Center for Disease Control's "How to Protect Yourself" guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html>.

Personal Hygiene

- Wash hands frequently, especially when preparing food, before and after meals, and after using restroom. Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze. Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Do not share water bottles, community food containers, PPE, flight helmets, or other personal items such as tobacco products, snacks, towels, etc.
- If you feel sick or have any flu like symptoms or have been exposed to others exhibiting symptoms, do not come to work and seek medical attention. If you reside in crew quarters and you feel sick, minimize contact with other residents.
- Regularly launder bedding, towels and clothes.
- Avoid close contact whenever possible.
- Have a plan where to go and seek help to maintain physical and mental health.

Training/Meetings/Group Activities

- Avoid group physical training (PT) and consider PT at home. Stagger PT times and disinfect showers between uses. Exercise outdoors: run, hike, or bike with separation.
- Hold open air crew meetings, briefings, training, and After Action Reviews with enough room to maintain appropriate social distancing. Limit training attendance to small groups.
- Implement measures such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) if possible.
- Consider alternative methods to present and attend training (online, VTC, conference call, etc.)

Facilities/Equipment

- Disinfect surfaces with all-purpose cleaner, commercial disinfecting wipes or disinfecting solution of diluted home bleach (4 teaspoons bleach per for each quart of water or 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water).
- Provide disinfecting wipes for exercise equipment. Wipe down before and after use.
- Disinfect office equipment and mobile phones regularly.
- Institute a cleaning period each day to disinfect surfaces in work and dormitory facilities.
- Put hand sanitizer dispensers in prominent places around workplace.
- Don't use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Consider implementing or increasing the use of commercial cleaning services.

Fire Response

- Consider using an increased number of vehicles during crew transports whenever possible to allow more separation within each vehicle. Plan for these extra vehicles when arriving at an incident and working on the fireline.
- Carry disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, and soap and water in fire vehicles and use these items frequently.
- Many crews carry extra Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as flight suits, flight helmets, fire resistant clothing, gloves, etc. Minimize use of these PPE items by multiple personnel and disinfect between uses.
- Disinfect mobile and handheld radios after use.
- To disinfect fire equipment including fire apparatus and aircraft, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. See CDC's recommendations [for household cleaning and disinfection](#).
- Order additional cache items (e.g. MREs, PPE) to have more stock on hand.
- Request to stay out of fire camps and Incident Command Posts (ICPs) when feasible. Limit close interaction with other incident personnel.

Contact your Fire Management Officer and Unit Safety Officer for more information.