

USEFUL ADVICE ON HOW TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF PBI FIRE & RESCUE UNIFORMS

Wenaas recommends washing fire and rescue uniforms in washing machines using special programmes for contaminated fire and rescue uniforms. Such special programmes have properties that are lacking in conventional domestic machines, in particular when it comes to the amount of water used during rinsing and the rinsing time. Kindly observe the supplier's directions for washing, drying and waterproofing.

How often should they be cleaned?

Garments should be cleaned after incidents where they have been exposed to incendiary fumes or where they have become soiled because of soot, combustion byproducts, blood, body fluids, tar, fuels, resin, paint, acid, or other hazardous fabrics.

At the fire scene

Contaminated clothing should be transported so that gases are sealed. Wenaas112 can supply water soluble laundry bags (art. no 2020-1-98). The laundry bag dissolves in contact with water so you can put into straight into the washing machine. Water soluble laundry bags must not be used for wet garments.

Preparing garments before washing

Fire and rescue uniforms should be cleaned separately from other garments. Everything that can be closed should be closed – Velcro, hooks, loops, zippers, buttons of all kinds, etc. Wrap the garment before washing so that spring hooks do not tear other garments during washing. If possible, use a fabric laundry bag to protect the garments as well as the interior of the washing machine.

Washing

Firefighter uniforms should be washed in machines that have special programmes for firefighter wear. Correct dosage of detergents is important, as well as sufficient rinsing time and water.

The outer parts of PBI/aramid are made of flame and heat resistant fibers, these properties cannot wash out or wear away.

Do not use bleaching agent containing chlorine, since this will damage the outer material.

Drying

The best way of drying the garment is hanging it in a shady place with good ventilation. Do not hang garments in direct sunlight, since UV radiation in the longer term will impair the outer material. Drying it in a drying drum at a low or cool temperature will also give a satisfactory result. Drying at high temperatures may lead to excessive shrinkage of the garment. To secure the best result when using a dryer drum, the drying should be completed when the garment has approx. 20% residual moisture.

Dry cleaning

Dry cleaning will not damage the protective properties of the PBI material. However, the process may have a negative effect on reflectors, leather, and Gore-Tex. Dry cleaning is therefore not recommended.

General on waterproofing

Firefighter wear is watertight and will remain watertight throughout the life of the garment. However, the outer material may become wet when used and it should therefore be waterproofed at regular intervals. Wenaas112 recommends that you follow the washing machine supplier's instructions for waterproofing.

Treatment and storage

Sunlight has a negative impact on the outer part of all fabrics. All outer parts of the material will deteriorate if exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light. Therefore do not store the garments in direct sunlight. Long-term storage under a fluorescent light is not recommended either. This includes hanging garments on vehicles or in station locations where sunlight comes in through the windows. Garments must either be protected through storing them in a closet or bag, or covered by a dark blanket or similar.

Other maintenance and repair

Zippers that have become sluggish may be lubricated by using wax or stearin, for example a candle. Kindly contact Wenaas for repair of damaged reflectors or Velcro. The same applies if there are holes in the outer material – it is especially important for this to be repaired at the supplier to prevent heat penetration. The protective capability of garments is significantly impaired if there are holes and tears in the outer material.

Wenaas offers repair of firefighter uniforms. We employ fabrics and accessories that protect the garments' certified properties.



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