



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members

Flame-Resistant (FR) Clothing Safety Message

If you work on or near energized equipment, or with gas, vapors, fuel, or combustible dust, you have likely worn flame-resistant clothing. Flame-resistant clothing, sometimes referred to as FR, and flame-retardant clothing, are frequently confused with one another. Flame-resistant clothing is designed to self-extinguish a fire, while flame retardant clothing is designed to slow down the ignition or combustion. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) outlines requirements that must be followed by manufacturers and employers related to this clothing. For example, OSHA requires the use of flame-resistant clothing when in an environment with potential for flames or electric arcs.

This safety talk provides general information on FR clothing. Each employer is responsible for assessing if, when, and what kind of PPE is needed. Employees are required to use it when specified by the employer.

How it Works

Flame-resistant clothing protects the wearer in the following ways:

- Reduction of burn severity and increases the likelihood of survival
- Resists ignition or self-extinguishes flame
- FR material will not melt on the skin and resists breaking open
- FR material provides insulation from excess heat

Tips for Wearing Flame-Resistant Clothing:

- Ensure your flame-resistant clothing fits properly. There should be a small layer of air between your undergarments and the FR clothing.
- Wear undergarments that constructed of 100% cotton.
- **Button or zip your FR clothing all the way, never roll up sleeves or pant legs, button or snap wrist cuffs, tuck in your shirttails.**
- The outermost layer of clothes must always be flame-resistant. Wearing non-FR clothing outside of FR will put you at risk for severe burns.