



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members

How To Properly Wear Your Fire Resistant Clothing Safety Message

First step in protecting yourself from arc flash and flash fire hazards on the job is wearing flame resistant (FR) clothing. However, if you're not wearing your FR properly, you could be leaving yourself at risk for serious injuries. In fact, there are some cases in which wearing your FR clothing improperly could be just as dangerous as not wearing any at all.

It is important to follow your company's guidelines for how to wear your uniform. Ideally, these guidelines should require that your uniform clothing is:

1. FR clothing shouldn't be baggy, but it also shouldn't be overly fitted or tight. The layer of air in between your skin and clothing adds insulation and protection in the event of an arc flash or flash fire, so it's important that clothing doesn't sit too close to the body.
2. Button your zip. You may be accustomed to wearing your shirts with a few of the top buttons unbuttoned, but FR clothing only protects your skin if it's covering it—so you'll want to button all your shirts (or zip/button your coveralls) completely.
3. Snap the shirt: Snap button shirts are a great feature for reason that in case of emergency, you can easily remove them.
4. Never expose your arms, do not roll your sleeves. Sure it's hot. But that doesn't mean you have to compromise your safety.
5. Tuck in your shirt tails: To prevent arc flash and flash fires from traveling under arc rated clothing and reaching your skin, it's important to keep shirts tucked into pants. Even if your skin isn't visible when your shirt is untucked, the gap in protection is enough to make you vulnerable to serious injury.

Conclusion:

You want to pay full attention to your clothing. Maintaining a comfortable range of motion will help you work comfortably without any restrictions. If you ever feel restricted that can be a reason of wrong-fitted FR clothing. You need to check whether it's too tight or too loose to wear.

Wearing poorly fitted FR clothing is similar to wearing a non FR clothing. Prevention is always better than cure.