



Charles County Department of Emergency Services
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 100 - Management & Administration

Vehicles, Apparatus & Equipment - 104.00		
S.O.P. # 104.16	Use, Maintenance, Cleaning and Storage of Personal Floatation Devices	PAGE: 1 OF 3
EFFECTIVE: 02/10/2007	Authorized: John Filer, Chief	
REVISED: 02/27/2019	Authorized: William Stephens, Director	

104.16.01 Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to establish standards for personnel using Personal Floatation Devices (PFD) with regards to use, maintenance, cleaning and storage.

104.16.02 Cited Materials

- NFPA 1952: Standard on Surface Water Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment
- Occupational Safety and Health Standard Title 46 CFR 159.010
- Occupational Safety and Health Standard Title 46 CFR .160.064-.077
- The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z88.2-1992
- SOP #400.01 Personal Protective Equipment

104.16.03 Responsibility

1. It is the responsibility of the Department to provide proper personal protective equipment (PPE) to its personnel and train them on its proper use.
2. It shall be the responsibility of all department officers and uniformed personnel to comply and enforce the regulations of this SOP.
3. It is the responsibility of all down range personnel operating in and around bodies of water to don the appropriate level of floatation PPE.
4. It is the responsibility of the officer in charge to ensure that all down range personnel operating in and around bodies of water to don the appropriate level of floatation PPE.
5. It is the responsibility of the Safety Coordinator to facilitate the preventative and annual maintenance of the Department's PFD's.



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104.16.04 General

PFD's are an integrated and important life safety component on every piece of apparatus that emergency services personnel respond on. PFD's are only to be utilized in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and within the recommended guidelines of OSHA.

104.16.05 Policy

1. It is the policy of the Department that all personnel expected to or likely to respond to, and function in operations around bodies of water, shall be equipped with, and trained in, the proper use and maintenance of personal floatation devices.
2. PFD's shall be used in accordance with SOP# 400.01 - Personal Protective Equipment.
3. PFD's or their component parts, which are observed to be worn, defective, or damaged, shall be removed from service immediately and a suitable replacement PFD or part shall be provided.

104.16.06 Cleaning

1. PFD's should be cleaned with mild soap and water.
2. Harsh chemical solvents should never be used to clean your PFD.
3. Always allow your PFD to drip dry prior to storing.
4. Never dry your PFD on a radiator, heater or any other direct heat source.

104.16.07 Storage

PFD's should always be stored:

1. In a dry and well-ventilated place,
2. Away from chemicals or oils;
3. Away from direct heat sources;
4. Away from sharp or jagged objects; and
5. Without heavy objects placed directly on top them.



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104.16.08 Maintenance & Inspection

1. PFD's should never be altered in any way shape or form from the original design of the manufacturer.
2. PFD's should be routinely checked for the following:
 - a. Rips,
 - b. Tears;
 - c. Holes;
 - d. Dry rot;
 - e. Water logging;
 - f. Mildew;
 - g. Odor;
 - h. Shrinkage of buoyant materials;
 - i. Burn marks (thermal or chemical);
 - j. Fading with cracks;
 - k. Air leaks; and
 - l. Oil or Chemical stains or melting.
3. Give the straps, belts and tie tapes a quick, hard tug to ensure that they are secure.
4. Any PFD showing signs of wear or abuse should be immediately removed from service, reported to the Safety Coordinator and replaced.