

FIRE SHELTER PROJECT UPDATE – MAY 2018

Fire Shelter information available at: http://www.nifc.gov/fireShelt/fshelt_main.html

Shelter Material Search:

- 23 companies have supplied material samples
- More than 200 material samples total
- Shelter finalists have been determined

The U.S. Forest Service entered into a collaborative agreement with the NASA Langley Research Center, located in Hampton, Virginia, to examine potential improvements to fire shelter performance. NASA and the U.S. Forest Service found that there are common performance requirements between fire shelters and flexible heatshields that can benefit both organizations.

North Carolina State University College of Textiles received a FEMA grant to initiate a project titled: Advanced Fire Blocking Materials for Enhanced Performance in Wildland Fire Shelters. NC State presented its findings to the NFPA technical panel in December 2017 and submitted a paper to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Fire Shelter Subcommittee.

Fire Shelter Material Testing:

- The Fire Shelter Test Protocol was used for testing material samples. Promising materials were used to construct full-scale fire shelters. Some of the shelters were tested in crown fire testing in the Northwest Territories of Canada as well as lab testing at the University of Alberta during the summer and fall of 2015 and 2016. The latest full-scale testing was conducted in October 2017.
- Until the September 2016 tests, the only materials that had a marked improvement in the thermal protective performance tests were those that were much heavier and more bulky than the current shelter material.

The NWCG Fire Shelter Subcommittee was briefed on the findings from fire shelter testing. The committee chose four different fire shelter styles for wear testing by firefighters this summer. Two of the shelter styles will be tested by line-going firefighters while two other styles of shelter, that are heavier and more bulky, will be tested by engine and equipment operators.

Fire Shelter Training:

'*Fire Shelter Training Reminders 2018*' has additional training information that is posted on the Fire Shelter website: http://www.nifc.gov/fireShelt/fshelt_training.html. This information should be used to supplement current training.

Fire Shelter Deployment Stories – Videos:

The Beaver Fire Story of 2014 has been added to the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned channel of YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/user/WildlandFireLLC>. All fire shelter deployment stories and common insights can be used to supplement current training.

The NWCG Executive Board, Risk Management Committee, Equipment Technology Committee and its Fire Shelter Subcommittee as well as the Fire Management Board of the Forest Service and the DOI agencies remain engaged in the project progress.