

Rapid Lesson Sharing

Event Type: Fire Shelter Damage and Delamination

Date: June 18, 2016

Location: Huron-Manistee National Forest,
Michigan

NARRATIVE

While facilitating an interagency training (S-130/S-190 Field Day) for a local volunteer fire department, a fire shelter was removed from an individual's fire line gear to be used as an example. The intent was to show the packaging and appearance of a "real" fire shelter without deployment.

After removing the shelter from the fire gear, there appeared to be several small holes in the shelter packaging and dirt was noticeable within the packaging. Due to the damage in the packaging, the shelter was taken out of service and was removed from the packaging for further inspection.



At first glance, the shelter appeared to be in good condition. However once the plastic packaging was removed from the shelter and was unfolded, several areas showed exposed inner-lining as well as signs of delamination.



Result and Corrective Action:

The fire shelter was removed from service and replaced.

Lessons and Discussion Points

- ✓ Units need to do more thorough and frequent fire shelter checks.
 - ✓ Consider the sensitivity of a packaged fire shelter with moderate-high daily use.
 - ✓ Consider the longevity of fire shelters through multiple seasons.
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Fire Shelter Inspection Guide

<http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf11512301/pdf11512301dpi300.pdf>

To avoid carrying damaged fire shelters, firefighters should inspect their fire shelters regularly. The condition of shelters can be evaluated based on wear of the protective PVC bag. The one-page guide in this Tech Tip (click on above link) has all the information firefighters need to inspect their fire shelters and determine whether to continue carrying them as they are, to rebag them, or to take them out of service

More Helpful Fire Shelter Information

http://www.nifc.gov/fireShelt/fshelt_main.html

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