

# For Your Safety

High-visibility safety apparel makes the wearer more visible to traffic under any conditions.

High-visibility safety apparel is personal protective safety clothing that is intended to provide conspicuity [make the wearer more visible] during both daytime and nighttime usage, and that meets the Performance Class 2 or 3 requirements of American National Standards Institute (ANSI)/International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA) 107-2004.<sup>1</sup>

All workers within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway who are exposed either to traffic, or to construction equipment within the work area shall wear high-visibility safety apparel. Workers affected by this requirement include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Highway construction and maintenance crews, including flaggers
- ❖ Inspectors
- ❖ Engineering personnel
- ❖ Survey crews
- ❖ Utility crews
- ❖ Responders

## When Should High-Visibility Safety Apparel Be Replaced?

High-visibility safety apparel should be replaced when it becomes faded, torn, dirty, soiled, worn, or defaced, or if it is not visible at 1,000 feet day or night. The typical useful service life of high-visibility safety apparel depends on the type of work an individual performs while wearing the apparel.

If you think your safety apparel is questionable, you should replace it.

Apparel that is worn on a daily basis has a service life expectancy of approximately 6 months, although apparel that is not worn on a daily basis may have a useful service life of up to 3 years.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Highway Administration worker visibility final rule

## How Do I Replace My High-Visibility Safety Apparel?

When apparel is ready for replacement, notify your safety compliance officer or supervisor and request replacement apparel. Ensure that they know the kind of work you are doing (repaving, maintenance work, nighttime work, etc.) so that they will know which type of apparel to provide to you. Once you have received your new apparel, cut your old apparel in half so that it can't be reused and then dispose of it properly.

Purchasing agents should consider the following when buying new apparel:

- ❖ Working conditions (time of day, temperature, etc.).
- ❖ Class of apparel needed (Performance Class 2, or 3; Class 1 is unacceptable for any highway work. See brochure entitled: Worker Visibility Be Seen. Be Safe. New Requirements for High Visibility Garments-Contact ATSSA for more information.)
- ❖ Compliance with ANSI/ISEA 107-2004 and 207-2006.
- ❖ State and local standards and guidelines
- ❖ MUTCD section 6E, which gives the appropriate colors for the apparel.

Developed by:  
American Traffic Safety Services Association  
15 Riverside Parkway Suite 100  
Fredericksburg, VA 22406-1022  
800-272-8772

This material is based upon work supported by the Federal Highway Administration under grant agreement No. #DTFH61-06-G-00004

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Federal Highway Administration.



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

# High-Visibility Safety Apparel In Highway Work Zones



When does my high-visibility apparel no longer protect me and need to be replaced?



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

— May 2008 —

### Acceptable



New high-visibility safety apparel is characterized by having vivid color contrast and high reflectivity.

### Marginal



Characteristics: Good reflectivity although the vest has some soiling and light fading.

### Unacceptable



Characteristics: little or no reflectivity, and soiled and faded material.

### Acceptable



Apparel that is used but is in like-new condition is characterized as having excellent color contrast, excellent reflectivity, and is not faded or soiled.

### Marginal \*



Characteristics: Good reflectivity but has some soiling and light fading of material. \*Note: This picture was taken with a flash and simulates nighttime conditions.

### Unacceptable



Characteristics: Poor color contrast, low or no reflectivity, significant fading or soiling, and deteriorated reflective strips.

Pictures provided by Michigan Department of Transportation and Washington Department of Transportation

### Factors that may cause the apparel to wear out more quickly, depending on the amount of use, include:

- ❖ Higher elevations due to increased ultra-violet rays
- ❖ Hot climates
- ❖ Work done while wearing apparel (some jobs are more dirty or strenuous and could be more likely to lead to soiling or tears)
- ❖ Care of the high visibility apparel: how you wash and store your apparel (refer to the label inside the apparel for proper care instructions)