

NWCG Equipment Technology Committee

Equipment Advisory: 25-01

September 23, 2025



To: Wildland Fire Community

From: Nate Hesse, Chair, NWCG Equipment Technology Committee (ETC)

Subject: Pre-2006 Fire Shelter Degradation and Discontinuation of Use

Issue: Pre-2006 fire shelters are still being carried on the fireline. In 2022, ETC released [Equipment Advisory 22-03: Performance Differences Between Pre- and Post-2006 Fire Shelters](#) when performance differences between pre- and post-2006 fire shelters were documented.

On July 12, 2025, two individuals deployed fire shelters on the Laguna Fire, Santa Fe National Forest, New Mexico. Neither firefighter received injury during the deployment. Equipment specialists from the USFS National Technology and Development Program (NTDP) inspected both shelters and found that one had a manufacture date of 2017, while the other was manufactured pre-2006. The shelters were exposed to the same conditions during the deployment and, while both undoubtedly protected the individuals, the pre-2006 shelter displayed more degradation and delamination while the 2017 shelter remained intact.

Through firsthand accounts and findings in the field, NTDP determined the degradation and delamination issues were present upon deployment of the shelter and not caused solely by conditions in the deployment zone.

Figures 3 through 6 show the differences between the pre-2006 and 2017 fire shelters deployed on the Laguna Fire.

Action: NWCG recommends all pre-2006 fire shelters be removed from service.

Fire shelters are readily available through FEDMALL. Firefighters and fire managers should immediately identify, replace, and destroy any pre-2006 fire shelters, identified by white or pink insert labels, see Figures 1 and 2. NWCG recommends all pre-2006 fire shelters be removed from service by January 1, 2026.

Figure 1 & 2: Pre-2006 shelters can be identified by a white or pink insert label.



NWCG standards are interagency by design; however, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

Background: NTDP equipment specialists documented degradation and delamination differences between pre- and post-2006 fire shelters deployed on the [Bridger Foothills](#) and [Dolan Fire](#). NTDP conducted testing comparing pre- and post-2006 shelters, the results are presented in the ETC Equipment Advisory linked above.

The *NWCG Standards for M-2002 Fire Shelters*, PMS 411, under the chapter on Inspection and Care states: “Inspect the fire shelter and PVC bag for damage and wear. Shelters and bags that do not pass the [Fire Shelter Inspection Flowchart](#) should be removed from service. Don’t assume that a new carrying case contains a new shelter.”

Figure 3: Top view, pre-2006 shelter, degradation and delamination present, minimal indicators of direct heat/flame exposure.



Figure 4: Top view, shelter manufactured 2017, minimal indicators of direct heat/flame exposure.



Figure 5: Bottom view, pre-2006 shelter, degradation and delamination present, minimal indicators of direct heat/flame exposure.



Figure 6: Bottom view, shelter manufactured 2017, minimal indicators of direct heat/flame exposure.



Additional Information:

- [NWCG Fire Shelter Inspection Flowchart, PMS 411-1](#)
- [NWCG Standards for M-2002 Fire Shelters, PMS 411](#)
- [Fire Shelter and Personal Protective Equipment Subcommittee](#)

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