

NWCG Equipment Technology Committee

National Fire Equipment System

Cache Memorandum: 25-01

4/28/2025



To: National Interagency Support Caches

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

Subject: Chaps, Chain Saw, M-2020: Nonconformities affecting use, appearance, and serviceability.

Issue: Forest Service specification, 6170-4K Chain Saw Chaps, all sizes (NFES #'s 0028, 0045, 0078, 0150) arriving at caches with incorrectly bound edges, exposing inner protective layers (Figures 1 and 2).

Action: Interagency Support Caches shall temporarily discontinue the distribution of Forest Service specification chain saw chaps manufactured in 2024 and 2025. Perform inspection of binding on product before initiating distribution.

Background: Multiple Interagency Support Caches report chain saw chaps arriving via cache to cache or from Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) with nonconformities affecting use, appearance, and serviceability. The nonconformities are limited to one manufacturer, Polo Custom Products, Inc., as displayed on the NFPA tag, inside left leg.

The National Technology and Development Program (NTDP) and DLA are working with Polo Custom Products, Inc. to develop a corrective action and stock replacement plan for chain saw chaps with nonconformities.

Figure 1: Binding not capturing inside shell, right leg.



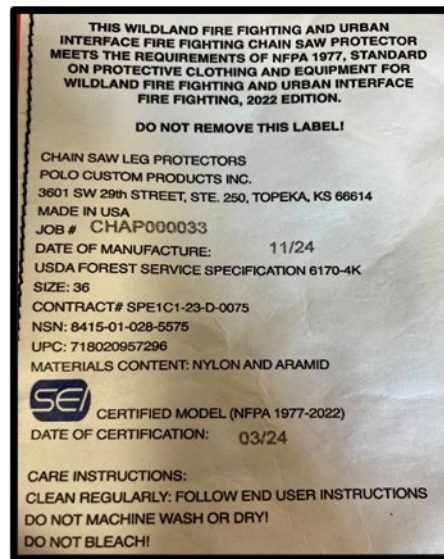
NWCG standards are interagency by design; however, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

Figure 2: Binding not capturing outside shell, right leg.



Additional Information: All new chain saw chaps delivered to caches in 2024 and 2025 are manufactured by Polo Custom Products, Inc. Check NFPA label inside left leg to confirm (Figure 3).

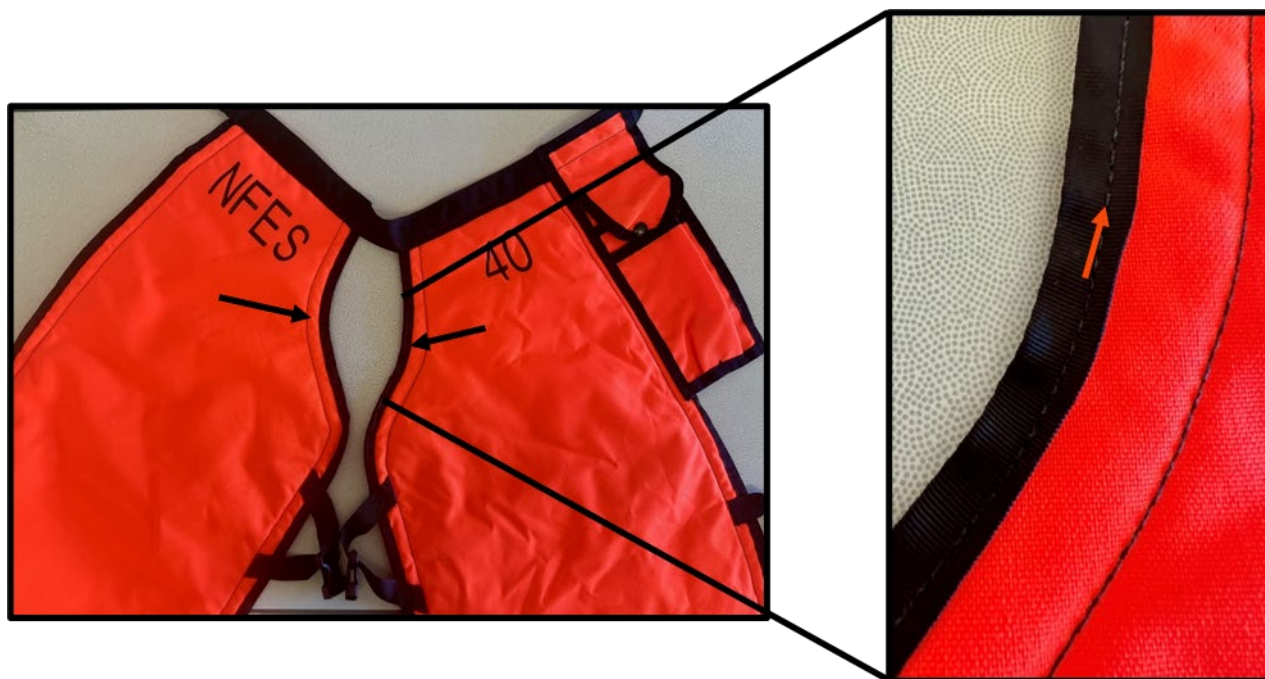
Figure 3: NFPA label. Manufacturer name on second line.



Inspection:

1. Remove chap from plastic bag, retaining End User Instructions.
2. Confirm chaps were manufactured in 2024 or 2025 by Polo, see NFPA label, figure 3.
3. Perform general inspection of both the front and back aspects of chain saw chaps.
4. Inspect binding tape to confirm the binding stitch line securely captures both the front and back shell (Figure 4), paying close attention to curved inner leg. Lift the edge of the black binding to confirm the outer orange shell is captured by the stitching.

Figure 4: Front side of chain saw chaps. Black arrows (on left image) show the area of conner on the inner curve of leg. Orange arrows (on right image) show binding stitch line.



Note: NTDP equipment specialists found Kevlar fibers (Figure 5) captured in the binding during preliminary inspections. These fibers are easily removed and will not affect the performance of the protective pad. This does not indicate a nonconformity if the binding tape has fully captured the outer shell layers.

Figure 5: Kevlar fibers captured in binding.



5. Restock all correctly manufactured chaps, including End User Instructions.
6. Apply a fluorescent sticker to the outside of boxes of chaps that have been inspected and are serviceable chaps. This ensures easy verification as product moves through national cache systems.
7. Report the number and size of any failed product using the attached form. Retain failed product until a stock replacement plan is in place.

Microsoft Forms Link: [Chap Inspection Form](#)

QR Code:



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