

On November 24, 2008, a new U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration regulation (Worker Visibility Final Rule - 23 CFR Part 634) will require firefighters and other first responders responding to or working at an incident on federally funded highways to wear a retro reflective safety vest that meets the Class II or III standards of the American National Standards Institute/International Safety Equipment Association (ANSI/ISEA) 107-2004 publication. The ANSI/ISEA 207-2006 Public Safety Vest standard has also been interpreted as meeting this requirement. For more information you can go to www.respondersafety.com.

On November 21, 2008, the FHWA issued an interim final rule revising the Worker Visibility rule (23CFR 634) to create an exemption for the firefighting community. This interim Final rule allows firefighters or other emergency responders working within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway and engaged in emergency operations that directly expose them to flame, fire, heat, and/or hazardous materials to wear retroreflective turn-out gear that is specified and regulated by other organizations, such as the National Fire Protection Association. Firefighters or other emergency responders working within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway and engaged in any other types of operations shall wear high-visibility safety apparel as defined in this rule. The FHWA decided to issue this interim final rule to address safety concerns raised by fire fighting community. The interim final rule was published in the Federal Register today and goes in effect on November 24, 2008. This rule can be accessed at the following link: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-27671.pdf>