



IAFF SAFETY ADVISORY

WILDLAND FIRE SHELTERS

JULY 2026

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMACG) has issued an emergency safety bulletin requesting an immediate, brief safety stand-down across all active incidents. This action follows the discovery of counterfeit, non-specification fire shelters on multiple wildland fires during the 2026 season.

WHAT LED TO THE STAND-DOWN?

Safety officers discovered fire shelters on the line that were purchased on the open market but do not meet **Forest Service (FS) Specification 5100-606**.

- **The Core Issue:** These counterfeit shelters are constructed from unknown, untested materials that have not undergone rigorous fire-behavior and thermal-protection testing. Using unspecified materials directly compromises thermal performance and structural integrity during an entrapment.
- **Procurement Source:** Early investigations indicate the primary vulnerability lies with private contract companies (contract crews, engines, and water tenders) procuring equipment via unvetted open-market vendors rather than through official federal cache supply chains.
- **Current Status:** The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) has noted that while these counterfeit shelters have been found on multiple active incidents, **none have been involved in actual deployments or entrapments** this season. The stand-down is a proactive mitigation measure to intercept these shelters before a tragedy occurs.

AFFECTED AGENCIES

- **Federal:** The United States Forest Service (USFS) and the newly unified United States Wildland Fire Service (USWFS).
- **State & Local:** State forestry and fire agencies represented under the National Association of State Foresters (NASF), including major state entities like CAL FIRE, as well as local government mutual-aid resources.
- **Private Contractors:** All private contract engines, hand crews, and tactical water tenders operating on any federally or state-managed incident.

NEXT STEPS FOR ALL FIRE FIGHTERS

All field personnel and incident management teams must execute the following actions:

1. **Immediate Equipment Inspection.** Every fire fighter, squad boss, and captain must physically inspect their issued fire shelter. Check the manufacturer labels, lot numbers, and serial markings against certified NWCG/GSA cache standards.
2. **Verify Specification Compliance.** *Check for genuine certification.* Ensure the shelter explicitly meets FS Specification 5100-606. Concurrently, verify that no pre-2006 shelters (which were mandated for complete removal and destruction by Jan. 1, 2026, under Equipment Advisory 25-01) remain in service.
3. **Isolate and Report Suspect Gear.** *Do not return to service.* If a shelter lacks proper labeling, features unvetted components, or appears to be an open-market counterfeit, it must be pulled from service immediately. Ground resources should submit a SafeNet or SAFECOM report detailing the vendor or source.
4. **Requisition Compliant Replacements.** *Coordinate via Incident Cache.* Line supervisors must coordinate immediately with the incident supply cache (SPUL) or home unit logistics to secure genuine, certified replacement shelters before crews are cleared to return to the line.