

*User Instructions*

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# **Firefighters Field Pack**



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Read this instruction pamphlet carefully. It explains how to assemble, adjust, and load the pack so it will fit you comfortably while you are walking and working. It also explains the various ways the pack can be configured to carry loads efficiently under different conditions.

## Pack Components

The firefighters field pack consists of (1) main pack, (2) harness, (3) equipment belt, (4) two canteen cases, and (5) belt pack. The field pack allows you to carry all on-line essentials in an efficient, nonrestrictive way.

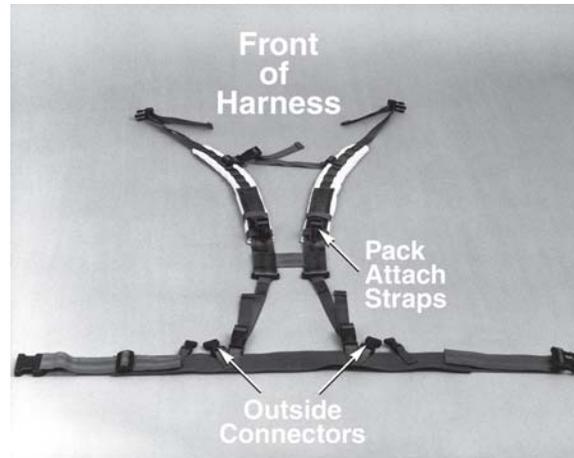
The complete field pack or its individual components are available from GSA. The fire shelter and shelter case are not part of the field pack system and must be ordered separately.



## Assembly and Adjustment

Follow these steps to ensure a comfortable fit with your pack:

- (1) Lay equipment belt on floor with inside of belt face down.
- (2) Attach back of harness to inside connectors.
- (3) Attach front of harness to outside connectors.
- (4) Put on harness and adjust belt to a comfortable position on the hips. Connect waist buckle and adjust to fit.
- (5) Take up slack in front harness straps. Have a partner do the same for back harness straps. Leave enough slack so belt does not ride up when you bend forward.
- (6) Attach fire shelter with metal slide keepers. Fasten metal slides to heavy webbing of equipment belt. Light inner belt protects you from the metal slide keepers.
- (7) Attach belt pack with metal keepers.
- (8) Attach canteen cases.



- (9) Have partner attach main pack to harness. Adjust up or down with pack attachment straps for comfort. To transfer more weight to the hips, adjust so the main pack rests on the belt pack or fire shelter; to put more weight on shoulders, position main pack above belt pack.



- (10) Attach sway straps located on the bottom of the pack to the equipment belt. Adjust straps so pack doesn't sway. Keep straps loose enough so belt won't ride up when you bend forward.



- (11) Adjust chest strap by raising or lowering to a comfortable level.



## **Loading Your Pack**

An important rule of thumb is to keep at least 50 percent of the weight on your equipment belt. When you put more weight in the pack than on the belt, the chest strap will ride up uncomfortably on your chest. Experiment with different load combinations to find the one that feels right before wearing the field pack on the fireline.

During travel, the equipment belt, harness, belt pack, canteen cases, hardhat, gloves, etc., fit into the main pack. On the fireline, carry bulky items such as coat, rations, and extra water in the main pack.

There is room on the equipment belt for additional items (such as radios).

## ***About the firefighters field pack. . .***



The Missoula Technology and Development Center obtained design ideas for the field pack through a Servicewide survey. Respondents said cruiser vests, military packs, and commercial day packs were inadequate. They felt an entirely new design was needed.

MTDC developed the firefighters field pack. It includes many ideas from field people who responded to the survey and sent prototype packs. The initial design has been refined, and the field pack described in this pamphlet reflects the latest design improvements.

The field pack's versatile design allows you to carry what you need to sustain yourself on the fireline. The belt pack makes it possible to do without the main pack. The component design lets you wear the pack in several ways:

- As a complete system, when lots of gear must be carried.
- Harness and equipment belt with belt pack for moderate loads and cooler upper body when a few items are needed plus fire shelter and canteens.
- Equipment belt alone for lightest loads such as fire shelter and canteens.

The field pack's different load-carrying options help reduce fatigue while working. On hot days shift gear to the equipment belt and remove the main pack. This promotes upper body cooling, which helps prevent heat stress.

Because the energy cost of lifting and supporting a load on your back while digging fireline or mopping up is significant, the field pack lets you carry most of your gear on the equipment belt. Military studies show that people can work and maneuver best in activities like firefighting with loads concentrated about the hips.

## **Suggestions?**

If you have suggestions for improvements after using your firefighters field pack, write or call George Jackson:

USDA Forest Service  
Missoula Technology and Development Center  
Bldg. 1, Fort Missoula  
Missoula, MT 59804  
Phone: (406) 329-3967  
Fax: (406) 329-3719

OpenMail: gjackson/wo,mtdc  
E-mail: gjackson/wo\_mtdc@fs.fed.us  
Lotus Notes: George Jackson/WO/USDAFS