



## PROTECTIVE CLOTHING OF DUPONT NOMEX® BRAND FIBER HELPS REFINERY WORKER ESCAPE FLASH FIRE

When Marvin Staben, a Colorado Refining Company worker, dressed for work on a subzero winter morning, he had no idea that the coveralls and coat of DuPont NOMEX® he put on would help save his life that day.

As Staben was walking around the end of a 5,000-gallon horizontal drum, he saw a flash out of the corner of his eye. In that instant, a flam-

mable vapor cloud surrounding him found an unknown ignition source, and Staben was engulfed in flames.

"I just closed my eyes and started running," he says. "I stopped after about five steps and opened my eyes, and all I could see was flames all around me." Staben closed his eyes again and kept running.



## CASE HISTORY

"I thought, 'How much farther do I have to go?' I fell off a 15-inch ledge and rolled on the ground until I felt cool air."

Another employee saw Staben trying to escape the fire, and urged him to keep rolling when he started to get up. After three more rolls, when Staben had traveled 35 feet from the point of ignition, the co-worker pulled Staben out of the fire.

Though Staben could have been fatally burned, his only injuries were first- and second-degree burns to his face and neck. He credits his protective clothing of DuPont NOMEX® for saving his life. NOMEX® is a flame-resistant fiber that does not burn, melt or drip. It provides a protective barrier between the fire and the wearer.

One of the best things about NOMEX® is that these characteristics are built into the chemical structure of the fiber itself; they are not added as a topical treatment. So NOMEX® is inherently

**PERFORM WHEN THE HEAT'S ON**

resistant to flame, and the protection it offers can't be washed or worn away.

Because of the protection it offers, NOMEX® is worn by firefighters, electrical utility workers, race-car drivers, military personnel and refinery workers.

Colorado Refining has had a mandatory NOMEX® clothing policy for all employees since 1979.

"We provide all of our employees with three pairs of coveralls, a jacket, a quilted jacket liner and a hard-hat liner, all made of NOMEX®," says Mike Mathews, safety manager for Colorado Refining.

"We firmly believe that if our NOMEX® program prevents one serious injury, as it did in Marvin Staben's case, it has more than paid for itself."

At the time of his accident, Staben was wearing all of his company-issued clothing of NOMEX® over thermal long johns, sweat pants, a flannel shirt and a hooded polyester sweatshirt, with the hood pulled up over his hard hat.

"I could tell how hot the fire was because all my clothes from the waist down, under my coveralls, were scorched," Staben says. "I had a pair of rubber gloves in my back pocket that completely melted. And the hood of my sweat shirt just disintegrated. It was gone."

"I feel I was very, very fortunate. My whole life could have changed in a few seconds. I know that if I hadn't been wearing NOMEX®, I probably wouldn't be here today."



Refinery worker Marvin Staben wears protective clothing of DuPont NOMEX® brand fiber on the job today. His company-issued protective coveralls, jacket and hard-hat liner of NOMEX® gave him the seconds he needed to escape a flash fire.

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