



Box Alarm TRAINING

FIREFIGHTER ESCAPE SYSTEMS



Here is a product sold by Xtreme Rescue that enables you to attach a Gut Belt to your existing turnouts. It simply uses your suspender attachment points to hold the Gut Belt in place with their belt accessory.

As firefighters, we often feel invincible and believe that we will always be able to perform whatever duty we are called to perform without negative consequences. At the same time, we are continually reminded every couple of days that we are not invincible with the announcement of another line of duty death.

Although every major turnout manufacturer that I know of is offering bail out kits and escape harnesses, many fire departments are not purchasing them due to the added cost and trying to operate on already thin budgets. As firefighters, this leaves us on our own to do what is necessary to be prepared in terms of training and equipment should we have to make an emergency escape. What follows is a ridiculously easy and relatively inexpensive option to be prepared.

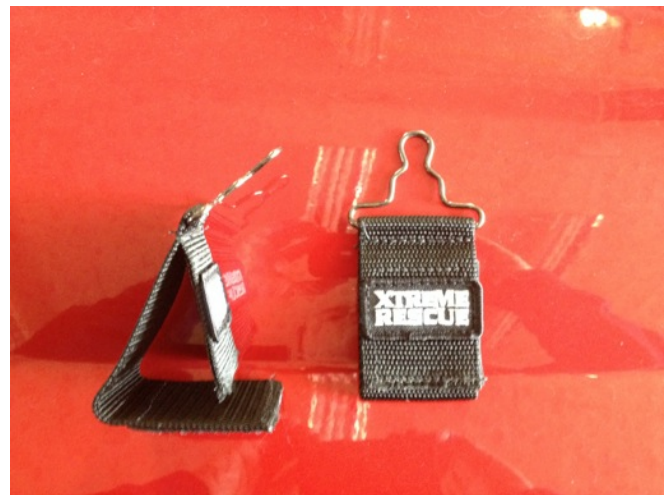


Original nylon belt provided with turnout gear.

Many turnout manufacturers are now offering turnouts with nylon belts and plastic quick connect buckles instead of suspenders. These pants already have loops, Velcro tabs, or both to keep the belt attached to the pants. If you are currently wearing this style pant, remove that belt. All it is good for is holding your pants up. Replace it with whatever truck style belt you already have or can afford.

These are the same pants, but the supplied belt is removed and replaced with a “Gut Belt” that I had hanging in my locker. In addition to holding my pants up, this belt:

- Is manufactured to NFPA 1983 requirements for ladder/escape belts.
- Rated at 8000 lbs.
- Can increase visibility if equipped with reflective and/or fluorescent trim.
- Has hardware that exceeds NFPA load specifications.
- Has multiple points of attachment.
- Can be utilized with existing factory loops and tabs.
- In conjunction with other equipment for personal escape and firefighter rescue, would be far more effective than a nylon belt and plastic buckle. Also useful with, ladder work, carrying other tools or accessories, tags lines, etc.



Nylon belt replaced with a Gut Belt.

What if you're using turnout pants equipped with suspender tabs and no loops or tabs to hold a belt? No problem with these inexpensive velcro loops that hang on your suspender tabs. These are not holding any weight. They just provide a means to keep an escape/ladder style belt on your pants so it can easily be utilized. These are manufactured by Xtreme Rescue. I picked them up at FDIC.

For me, this is a good option to provide a balance between purchasing and wearing a complete escape or rappelling type system with leg loops all the time and being completely unprepared.

Lastly, keep in mind this is part of a system. A belt alone will not do you any good without at least a carabiner, a section of rope (how much is up to you), and practice, practice, practice.

**I am not associated with, nor profit from anything affiliated with Xtreme Rescue.*



Robert Kramer is a 19 year veteran of the Memphis Fire Department in Memphis, TN. He has consistently been assigned to the busiest companies in the City and he currently works on Engine Co. 10 in South Memphis. To check out his material go to www.BoxAlarmTraining.com.