

BEST PRACTICES

for Preventing FIREFIGHTER CANCER

- 1 Full protective equipment (PPE) must be worn throughout the entire incident, including SCBA during salvage and overhaul.
- 2 A second hood should be provided to all entry-certified personnel in the department.
Following exit from the IDLH, and while still on air, you should begin immediate gross decon of PPE using soap water and a brush, if weather conditions allow. PPE should then be placed into a sealed plastic bag and placed in an exterior compartment of the rig, or if responding in POVs, placed in a large storage tote, thus keeping the off-gassing PPE away from passengers and self.
- 3
- 4 After completion of gross decon procedures as discussed above, and while still on scene, the exposed areas of the body (neck, face, arms and hands) should be wiped off immediately using wipes, which must be carried on all apparatus. Use the wipes to remove as much soot as possible from head, neck, jaw, throat, underarms and hands immediately.
- 5 Change your clothes and wash them after exposure to products of combustion or other contaminants. Do this as soon as possible and/or isolate in a trash bag until washing is available.
- 6 Shower as soon as possible after being exposed to products of combustion or other contaminants. "Shower within the Hour"
- 7 PPE, especially turnout pants, must be prohibited in areas outside the apparatus floor (i.e. kitchen, sleeping areas, etc.) and never in the household.
- 8 Wipes, or soap and water, should also be used to decontaminate and clean apparatus seats, SCBA and interior crew area regularly, especially after incidents where personnel were exposed to products of combustion.
- 9 Get an annual physical, as early detection is the key to survival. The NVFC outlines several options at www.nvfc.org. "A Healthcare Provider's Guide to Firefighter Physicals" can be downloaded from www.iafc.org/healthRoadmap.
- 10 Tobacco products of any variety, including dip and e-cigarettes should never be used at anytime on or off duty.
- 11 Fully document ALL fire or chemical exposures on incident reports and personal exposure reports.

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Occupational cancer in the fire service

Recommendations for best practice

What you can do as an individual

Take care of yourself and your equipment.

- **Live healthy, exercise and get the required sleep.**
- **Always be well hydrated, even the day before your shift.**
- **Always at least use the necessary protection that the employer has made available to you.**
- **Keep your gear in good condition.**
- **Remember that even a newly washed suit will most likely contain harmful particles in the deferent layers!**
 - only wear your turnout gear when being to a fire incident.
- **Always follow the industry manuals for equipment.**
- **Remember that the training facilities is also contaminated, even though there has been no fire on that day.**
- **Stay well away from the field of action unless you have a job to do there. There are harmful particles in the air; even though, they cannot be seen.**



At the fire station

Divide the station into clean and unclean areas to avoid cross-contamination

- Check out all PPE and equipment on the vehicles.
- Pack your personal bag with a full set of inner clothing and turnout gear to bring to the scene to make it possible to change after showering on the scene.
- The vehicles must have exhaust extraction while in the garage.
- Secure clear signs, marking the clean and unclean areas in the fire house.
- Have an airlock separating the clean and unclean areas.
- Accommodation, office, dining areas etc. should be with excess pressure.
- Have washing machines that collect contaminated water in the divided clean/not clean washing room to prevent polluted water from spilled into the environment and nature.
- Use high performance LCO2 decontamination to proper decontamination of turnout gear, boots, gloves.
- Gym, and sauna facilities.
- Have proper facilities for cleaning contaminated equipment.
- Avoid unnecessary disturbances of sleep.



During intervention

Have your own and your colleague's safety in mind.

- **Put on your breathing apparatus in safe distance from the place of the actual fire.**
- **Wear the correct protective gear for the whole of the ongoing fire.**
- **Check up on your colleague to make sure the safety is optimal.**
- **Do not put blind trust in electronic monitoring devices, gas detectors etc. and think you are safe to take off your breathing protection.**
- **If in case of emergency it is strictly necessary to remove your mask, immediately leave the hazardous area.**
- **Use textile inner gloves.**
- **Bag up your turnout gear immediately after smoke diving.**
- **All used equipment is contaminated and should be placed in a pointed-out area. Do not put it back on the truck.**
- **Used/contaminated turnout gear and equipment should be collected and handled by a separate vehicle for this purpose only and crew trained to handle it.**
- **"Shower within the hour". Shower already on the scene after every smoke diving and change your clothing.**



After returning to the fire station

- Renovate the vehicles and pack it up with cleaned equipment.
- Make technical and/or psychological evaluation/defusing.
- Recover, drink and eat.
- Shower again:
 1. Shower without soap and scrub.
 2. Use sauna or gym until sweating.
 3. Shower without soap and scrub. Use soap and scrub.
- Continue what you did before the call.

Feel free to contact for more information info@brandcancer.dk