

# CANCER RISK REDUCTION PROCEDURES

## **KEY CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A series of small steps to limit exposure to contaminants can greatly reduce the risk of cancer in fire department personnel.
- Consider ANY products of combustion carcinogenic (both seen and unseen).
- Take every effort to limit exposure and do not breath smoke or engine exhaust.

## Firefighting Turnouts & Uniforms:

- All firefighting personnel will be issued two sets of firefighting turnouts (which includes two hoods, two sets of firefighting gloves, and extra helmet hardware). The backup set of turnouts shall be kept clean and ready to utilize whenever the primary set of turnouts is contaminated.
- Firefighting turnouts (including hood/gloves/helmet hardware) shall be laundered immediately after every structure fire involving any smoke contamination. If smoke can be smelled on turnouts, then they should be laundered.
- Firefighting helmets should be kept clean and free of smoke buildup.

## Fire Station Procedures:

- All fire stations will have a blue painted line on the floor delineating the “clean” living area of the station, and the “dirty” work area of the station. All PPE shall remain in the “dirty” work area of the station, and no PPE shall be worn or carried across the blue line into the “clean” living areas.
- As much as possible, personnel shall not breathe engine exhaust, particularly in the apparatus bays of the station. Every effort shall be taken to limit exhaust accumulation inside the station such as the use of station exhaust fans, keep apparatus bay doors open when possible, etc. When possible, allow the apparatus bay to sufficiently ventilate before closing all of the doors and take care to limit engine exhaust drifting into the “clean” living areas of the station.

## On-Scene Procedures:

- All personnel should take immediate action on scene in order to not breathe any amount of smoke or engine exhaust. Move up-wind, away from the scene, or utilize an SCBA to eliminate smoke or exhaust exposure. The highest risk may be personnel standing outside of the burning structure.
- After initial fire knockdown, letting the structure cool down for up to 60 minutes will significantly limit carcinogenic exposure to personnel. If possible, pull back personnel during this cooling time before finishing overhaul.
- All personnel working inside of a structure fire shall go through a gross decontamination process following firefighting activities. This will typically involve a full rinse down with a booster hose or a general purpose hose (if available) and soap prior to disconnecting your 2<sup>nd</sup> stage regulator. This should occur near the entry point of the structure.
- Personnel working on the scene of a structure fire shall utilize the SCBA according to the policy on SCBA Use.

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## Post-Scene Procedures:

- Every effort should be made to eliminate contamination into the cab of the apparatus.
- Every effort should be made to remove contaminated clothing/PPE as soon as possible (if appropriate). Personnel are encouraged to carry an extra T-shirt/sweatshirt to change into following on-scene decontamination.
- Personnel should strive to shower within an hour after becoming contaminated at an incident. Utilize on-scene wet wipes, booster line, general purpose hose, or warm water rinse with soap prior to leaving the scene.
- After a gross decontamination process, contaminated turnouts shall be bagged in large garbage bags for transport back to the station.
- After a gross decontamination process, contaminated SCBA's shall be bagged in large garbage bags for transport back to the station.
- Decontaminated SCBA's should be left outside of the apparatus cab to dry and off-gas. SCBA's from reserve engines may be utilized during this process.