

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE HEALTH AND CANCER STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

Any City Fire Department (ACFD) Standard Operating Guideline

Operational Guideline # _____

SUBJECT: Firefighter Health & Cancer

DATE: January 2017

PURPOSE: To provide for best practices in preventing cancer and other illnesses due to the toxic effects of firefighting.

A. AREAS OF APPLICABILITY

This guideline applies to all responses to fires and other incidents involving toxic smoke or toxic chemicals.

B. CLEANING PPE

1. Whenever ACFD firefighters engage in firefighting activities, PPE shall be decontaminated by rinsing it off at the incident scene to remove as much soot, smoke, toxic chemicals and debris as possible. This includes hoods, gloves, helmet liners, boots, coats and pants.
2. PPE should be cleaned at least annually, and after each working structure fire or any hazmat incident, in accordance with NFPA 1851 and NFPA 1500.
3. PPE that is contaminated by spilled chemicals shall be gross decontaminated at the incident scene by rinsing it off with water. The PPE shall be bagged (in plastic trash bags) and returned to quarters for determination of its fitness for continued use.

C. PERSONAL CLEANING

1. Firefighters will wipe off their faces, necks, and hands with baby wipes (or similar products) while in rehab and before getting into a vehicle or returning to quarters from any fire or hazmat incident.
2. Firefighters shall wash hands after firefighting and before they eat any food to avoid ingesting any toxins. This also applies to EMS, hazmat, and all other incidents.

3. Firefighters shall take a hot shower as soon as possible after returning from firefighting in order to remove toxins from their bodies. Firefighters should strive to accomplish this within an hour of returning to quarters.

D. STATION, EQUIPMENT, AND APPARATUS CLEANING

1. All tools and equipment shall be rinsed off at the incident scene to remove chemicals, smoke/soot, debris, and contaminants before they are put back on the apparatus to return to quarters.
2. Hose shall be rinsed and washed after each use at a fire.
3. The seats and interior of each cab shall be cleaned if firefighters wear potentially contaminated PPE back to quarters from an incident.
4. PPE shall not be worn in the living quarters or administrative areas of the fire station, except after cleaning if part of a training exercise [it is necessary for many small fire departments to use their administrative and living quarters as training props because they do not have regular and easy access to a training facility].

E. FIRE OPERATIONS

1. SCBA will be worn during overhaul. It will not be removed until the debris is cold to the touch and there is no steam or smoke rising.
2. Hoods will be removed promptly after firefighting activities. Hoods will not be worn in rehab or during pickup or while returning to quarters. Firefighters should avoid wearing their hood around their neck when unnecessary.
3. Do not rely upon multi-gas meters to declare the air safe at fire incidents.

F. TWO HOODS

1. All firefighters will be issued two hoods. One hood shall be retained as a clean spare. After each fire, firefighters will switch to their clean hood upon returning to quarters. Contaminated hoods will then be washed and become the spare hood.

G. PPE in Vehicles

1. All gear following a fire shall be placed in a hermetically-sealed container, such as a gear bag or plastic tub, prior to transport to prevent contamination of the vehicle's interior.
2. If possible, PPE stowed in personal vehicles shall be stowed in the trunk or other space away from the passenger compartment.