



# The Training Brief

Quick Reference mini-training Topics  
11 Actions to Protect Yourself from Cancer

*The purpose of this training topic is actions you can take to protect yourself by reducing your exposure to cancer causing chemicals*

## Discussion

*What is your department's policy on a cancer prevention plan?*

### Fact:

*Today's residential fires have more in common with haz mat events than house fires due to materials in common homes such as plastics and synthetics.*

*Commercial and vehicle fires have highly concentrated toxicants and dumpster fires contain completely unknown substances and toxicants*

*Prevention is key both on the fireground and in the fire station, as well as personally with our health.*

**Firefighters have a 9% higher risk of being diagnosed with cancer than the general U.S. population**



**Firefighters have a 14% higher risk of dying from cancer than the general U.S. population.**

## Make the Necessary Changes

## WHAT IMMEDIATE ACTIONS CAN I TAKE TO PROTECT MYSELF?

- 1 Use SCBA from initial attack through overhaul. (Not wearing SCBA in both active and postfire environments is the most dangerous voluntary activity in the fire service today.)
- 2 Do Personal Hazard Reduction on PPE to remove as much soot and particulates as possible.
- 3 Use Wet wipes to remove as much soot possible from head, neck, jaw, throat, underarms, and hands immediately and while on the scene.
- 4 Change your clothes and wash them immediately after a fire.
- 5 Shower thoroughly after a fire.
- 6 Clean PPE, gloves, hood, helmet, including helmet liner immediately after a fire.
- 7 Do not transport contaminated PPE home. Never transport in the cab of apparatus or vehicles.
- 8 Decontaminate the interior of apparatus after fires.
- 9 Keep bunker gear out of living and sleeping quarters.
- 10 Stop using tobacco products.
- 11 Use sunscreen or sunblock.

The importance of annual medical examinations cannot be overstated – early detection and early treatment are essential to increasing survival.



Firefighter Cancer Support Network  
2600 West Olive Ave. 5<sup>th</sup> Floor – PMB 608  
Burbank CA, 91505  
Toll Free (866)994-FCSN (3276)

*Use a diesel exhaust system whenever entering or exiting the station to reduce the exposure to diesel exhaust which has been classified as a group 1 (Most Dangerous) carcinogen by the IARC.*

*Ensure you have a second clean set of PPE, hood, and gloves to switch into immediately after a fire if possible*