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.

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.


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.

Make the Necessary Changes

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.