

**Stillwater Fire District
Stillwater, New York**

Fire District Policy and Procedure Policy Number: x of 20xx

Policy Name: Cancer Mitigation Policy

Date Issued: June 11, 2018

Effective: June 11, 2018

Revised:

Review Date: January 2019

I. PURPOSE

A. It is understood that firefighting is inherently dangerous whether it be structural firefighting, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, training, or other incidents.

Firefighters operating within the realm of their duties during the above listed incidents, responses, or training may be exposed to contaminants potentially harmful to their health and wellness. Contaminants can include but are not limited to the by-products of combustion, smoke, asbestos, fiberglass, motor vehicle fluids, or anything else that firefighters may be exposed to during the above listed incidents, responses, or training. A firefighter's full protective ensemble, including Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), should protect a firefighter from the majority of these contaminants, but exposure is still a risk when the ensemble is used and not cleaned or maintained properly

It's important for firefighters to understand that after structural firefighting, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, training, or other incidents, that contaminants remain on their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), SCBA, and their bodies (hair, skin, personal clothing, etc.). Firefighters must also understand that even after the removal of those items that they may still be exposed to contaminants which may be harmful to their health and wellness. Recent studies and statistics have shown an increase in "Firefighter Related Cancers" and "Line of Duty Deaths" attributed to cancer amongst firefighters.

The Contaminant Exposure Policy, shall be applicable to all Interior Firefighters, Exterior Firefighters, Fire Police, or any members who are involved in operations at structural fires, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, trainings, or other incidents where members may be exposed to contaminants. The exposure policy shall not apply to large scale Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Incidents which are operational under established HAZMAT incident procedures.

II. POLICY

A. The elements and guidelines established in this policy are to ensure and improve the overall health, wellness, and safety of all members of the fire company. This policy shall provide a means and guideline for the members of the fire company to eliminate or limit their exposure to contaminants from structural firefighting, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, trainings, or other incidents wherein they may be exposed to contaminants. The elements and guidelines established in this policy shall provide the members of the fire company direction in the "De-contamination", cleaning, and storage of their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), SCBA, tools, and apparatus after exposure or possible exposure to contaminants.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. This policy shall reference NFPA 1851 Standard on Selection, Care and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Firefighting and Proximity Firefighting and NFPA 1500 Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health.
- B. It shall be the responsibility and duty of the Chief, the Officers, and the members of the fire company to make every effort to not unnecessarily expose themselves and others to contaminants, and to reduce or limit members to exposure to contaminants during structural firefighting, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, trainings, or other incidents.
- C. As part of the SOGs a means of gross decontamination shall be established for incidents where contamination may occur.
 - i. The decon area shall be away from the Hot Zone or Hazard area where a water source is available for participants to rinse contaminants from their PPE, tools and equipment prior to leaving the scene.
 - ii. The decon area may be managed by a member who is not directly involved in the incident and is appropriate for a firefighter designated as "exterior".
- D. The appropriate manager of the decon area is a Safety Officer.
- E. After interior structural firefighting, live fire training, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, or incidents where members were exposed to contaminants, the following steps shall be followed for "**Gross Decontamination**":
- F. Members who have contaminants on their PPE shall proceed to the established decon station prior to removing any of their PPE and SCBA and prior to reporting to rehab (if necessary) or to entering the apparatus.
- G. If a member has been deconed or hosed off and they return to the operations area, they must again be deconed prior to leaving the scene of the incident.
- H. If gross decon is not established, any potentially contaminated gear shall be stored in an exterior compartment of the apparatus for decontamination at the station upon return. Once back at the station the member shall clean their PPE, SCBA and SCBA mask following the procedures recommended for cleaning.
- I. In addition to cleaning PPE, SCBA and any association equipment, the crew shall decontaminate any debris on the interior of the apparatus, particularly the floors or any areas which have incident residue remaining.
- J. If PPE and SCBA must be transported in the crew cab of the apparatus, the members shall insure that the interior of the cab is cleaned as well as any exterior compartment used to transport PPE or SCBA.
- K. After returning to station any contaminated PPE or SCBA; including the mask shall be cleaned and sanitized according to the standards set forth in NFPA 1851 and by the recommendations of the manufacturer. The following procedures shall be followed;
- L. Cleaning of all SCBA, SCBA face pieces, and SCBA cylinders shall take place after use at any structural fire, motor vehicle accident (if used), motor vehicle fires, training, or other incidents.
 - i. SCBA harnesses shall be cleaned with warm water and a mild soap or detergent if recommended by the manufacturer. Once cleaned, the SCBA can be placed back on the apparatus for use and to dry.
- M. SCBA face pieces shall be cleaned and sanitized using very warm water and a mild soap or detergent in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Once cleaned they shall be placed back on the apparatus with the SCBA to dry and for future use.
- N. SCBA cylinders shall be cleaned using warm water and a mild soap or detergent if recommended by the manufacturer. Once the cylinders are refilled they may be placed back on the apparatus for future use.
- O. It shall be the responsibility of all members to ensure that their PPE is thoroughly cleaned and dried and returned to service after each incident for the protection of other

- members and themselves. The Chief and all Officers shall ensure that all members comply with this policy.
- P. When cleaning and washing their PPE, all members shall use the washer / extractor provided by the Fire District for cleaning and washing the protective hood, gloves, turnout coat and liner, turnout pants and liners.
 - i. It is recommended that members wash their protective hood and coat and pant liners separate from the outer shells of the coat and pants. "Drag Rescue Device" (DRD) and suspenders maybe included when washing the liners and protective hoods. Once the liners, protective hoods, DRD, and suspenders are washed it is recommended that they be hung to dry in the members gear rack, coats and liners can be dried by using the air dryer provided. It is also recommended not to dry any portion of the PPE in direct sunlight.
 - ii. After using the washer / extractor, it is strongly recommended that one full cycle be run without any PPE to ensure any residue from prior use is rinsed out and removed.
 - Q. Cleaning of the member's structural firefighting boots and helmet can be accomplished by simply using warm water and a mild soap or detergent. Once cleaned the member can place the items in their gear locker for drying.
 - R. Any other tools or equipment carried by the member, including any bail out system components, shall also be cleaned if it has been contaminated by debris or products of combustion.
 - S. It is highly recommended that a member that was involved in structural firefighting, motor vehicle accidents, motor vehicle fires, training, or other incidents following the below listed procedures for personal cleanliness:
 - T. Persons involved at incidents where they were members of the operational crew and contaminates were present should attempt to shower or clean their person as soon as practically possible.
 - i. If a member is unable to shower immediately after any incident, the member shall, as soon as practical, wipe themselves down with sanitizing wipes ("baby wipes"). Members shall pay close attention to their faces, necks, underarms, and groin area when wiping down as these are the area's most prone to sweat build up and exposure to contaminants due to open pores.
 - U. The Stillwater Fire District shall be responsible to supply sanitizing wipes which will be available on the apparatus.
 - V. Upon arrival at their residence, members shall doff personal clothing and launder them as soon as practicable. Clothes contaminated from an incident should be laundered separately from other's clothing and may need to be laundered more than once to remove all contaminates. It is recommended that the washing machine be run on a cleaning cycle to remove any residual contamination from the washing machine.
 - W. Once a member is at their residence and doffed their personal clothing the member shall shower immediately to reduce exposure of the household to incident contaminates carried by the member.
 - X. It is highly recommended that members help themselves, co workers and family members by limiting their exposure to contaminants they have been exposed to at the scene of an incident. Maintaining clean PPE and equipment and showering ASAP after any incident will likely mitigate their chances of their health and wellness being affected thus reducing the likelihood of firefighting cancers or other diseases.

Board of Fire Commissioners