



UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

26-004

January 9, 2026

TO: All Personnel

FROM: Health & Safety Committee

SUBJECT: Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month

Cancer remains the leading cause of line-of-duty deaths among firefighters. In recognition of Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month, this memo provides key information, resources, and actions our members can take to reduce exposure, support early detection, and care for one another.

In partnership with the IAFF and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN), Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month focuses on the theme “Doing It Right.” This theme aligns with the Doing It Right: Reducing Cancer in the Fire Service initiative, a comprehensive resource developed for firefighters, EMS providers, and their families. Since 2005, FCSN has supported thousands of firefighters through education, one-on-one mentoring, and critical assistance following a cancer diagnosis.

Firefighters are routinely exposed to diesel exhaust, smoke, and soot at fires that contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)—all known carcinogens. Reducing exposure requires consistent habits and shared accountability, including gross decontamination, timely turnout exchange, and adherence to post-fire decontamination practices following suppression or exposure events.

Post incidents, all personnel on a fire, particularly those that were in the IDLH, should be identifying that they had an ‘exposure’ on ESO before completing the call. This continues to assist us when needing historical data. Additionally, if the supervisor and/or battalion chief identifies the need for a more thorough explanation, the completion of a First Report of Injury is encouraged.

All firefighters are strongly encouraged to enroll in the National Firefighter Cancer Registry, regardless of whether they have received a cancer diagnosis. Full-time, part-time, volunteer, and wildland firefighters are eligible to participate. Registry participation is critical to improving our understanding of cancer risks in the fire service and supporting research that informs prevention, policy, and long-term health protections.

The Utah Firefighter Cancer Initiative, made possible through the passage of HB 065, offers one of the most comprehensive firefighter cancer screening programs in the nation. The program’s goal is early detection to improve treatment outcomes and long-term health.

Active Utah urban and wildland firefighters who are 40 years of age or older or who have a minimum of seven years of service are eligible for screening. Career, part-time, and volunteer firefighters who meet these criteria may participate. Screening lists are currently being validated across multiple databases. Members will receive notification by email based on service time and age as this process is completed. The State and UFRA continue to work through reconciliation issues to ensure accuracy.

The Health & Safety Committee recommends taking time to review the information below to better understand how individual firefighters and crews can reduce cancer exposure and support prevention efforts.

Additional Resources:

- <https://www.firefightercancersupport.org/ffcam>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/firefighters/registry/index.html>
- <https://utahfirefightercancer.org/>

Operational Guidance:

- [450-38 Post Fire Decontamination](#)
- [On scene decon concerns](#)

For additional information on Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month or to review any of several studies on the Firefighter Cancer Support Network website: [FCSN Fact Sheets](#)

Please review this information and attachments as a crew. Reducing cancer risk requires consistent habits, informed decision-making, and shared responsibility. Building and sustaining a culture that prioritizes health and safety starts with each of us.