



# UFA Safety Message

An Official Communication  
from the UFA Health and Safety Office  
February 10, 2023



## *PFAS in Bunker Gear*

Members should be aware that there is PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in your bunker gear. PFAS are synthetic “forever chemicals” and are known to be carcinogens and create an increased risk of certain cancers. They are present in everyday items but have been found to be prevalent in all three layers of our bunker gear. There are presently no PFAS-free bunker gear alternatives. Accordingly, while you should continue to wear bunker gear to appropriate jobs, as a best first line of defense for firefighters, protect yourself by limiting unnecessary exposure. This means that members should only be wearing bunker gear while responding to assignments that require its use.

The IAFF recommends that the following precautions be followed:

- Turnout gear should NOT be taken into firehouse living areas.
- When transporting gear in personal vehicles, it should be in a sealed container or bag, and preferably NOT transported in the passenger compartment.
- Apparatus cabs should be cleaned regularly and after every fire.
- Wash your hands after handling turnout gear.
- Legacy turnout gear should be replaced as new PFAS-free technologies become available.
- Do not wear turnout gear on responses where this level of protection is not necessary.

For more information on PFAS, you can go to <https://www.iaff.org/pfas/>

*Fraternally,*

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