



UFA Safety Message

An Official Communication
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Decontamination

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. 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.

- Turnout gear should NOT be taken into firehouse living areas. Gear should only be donned AFTER the receipt of a ticket that will require its use.
- When transporting gear in personal vehicles, it should be in a sealed container or bag, and NEVER transported in the passenger compartment.
- Apparatus cabs should be cleaned regularly and after every fire. Decon wipes are available at R&D for apparatus.
- Wash your hands after handling turnout gear.
- 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/>.

A recent spat of multiple alarm fires is a reminder to members to remain vigilant around decontamination procedures.

Members should expect to encounter asbestos and other carcinogens while fighting fires. It is vitally important to decontaminate yourself, including showering as soon as possible and changing into a clean uniform.

PPE shall be sent to DSU for cleaning. Ask the officer to fill out an EDR-1 on the iPad and call 718-478-3150 for pick up. Normal turnaround time for decon is 48 hours. If loaner gear is needed, DSU will provide it.

Stay safe and protect yourselves.

Fraternally,

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