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Protecting Yourself from Unnecessary Exposure During Wildland Fires Associated with Mutual Aid Responses

Lung Protection:

In accordance with the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the SFPD usage of the issued N95 (3M 1870+) Respirators are more than sufficient for implementing perimeter security, prevention of looting, assisting civilians back to their property (once the property is not in the immediate vicinity of active wildland fires), as well as other non-firefighting activities. During these activities, employees may be exposed to smoke particulates and the department issued N-95 respirators are sufficient to protect employees by greatly reducing inhalation of particulates in this environment such as smoke particles, dirt/dust, aerosols and other potentially harmful substances. The N95 Respirator is not meant to be utilized close (within 50 yards) to active fires where gases may be an issue. There are at least two N95 Respirators in the Personal Protection Equipment Kits in each patrol car and each station should have 10 boxes of the N95 Respirators (200 masks).

Skin Protection:

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for skin protection may include eye protection such as safety glasses and long sleeved garments. Any and all PPE used shall not hinder officers from doing their job. In addition, no PPE shall be utilized that covers identifying marks as a law enforcement officer.

PPE Kits should be deployed in all patrol vehicles and can be obtained at the HOJ-PCD storeroom.

Standard issue uniforms and boots should be sufficient for employee protection. Long sleeves should be worn whenever possible depending upon the working environment/temperature. A space of at least 50 yards should be maintained from an active fire.

Washing or Cleaning of Uniforms, Boots and Utility Belt:

After a shift is complete, officers should get to a safe location, doff all SFPD uniforms or other clothes worn during that shift. If possible, officers should change into their civilian clothes to travel back to their homes/housing. Soiled or smoky clothes should be bagged up for eventual washing in a separate load. Boots and utility belt should be separately bagged and a surface wipe down should be completed before the next shift. Any firearm should be stored in a safe lockable location and cleaned separately. These steps should be followed after each shift during a wildland fire. Additionally, a clean uniform should be used for each shift.

Vehicle details/recommendations:

Department issued vehicles need to be properly cleaned and decontaminated. Any department vehicle used in mutual aid response to a wildland fire can be cleaned at a City approved carwash

vendor. The station's assigned VMO will take the vehicle to an approved vendor to remove exterior deposits, interior vacuum, surface wipe down and change any cabin filters.

General Health Concerns:

Avoid dehydration with frequent access to water. Before all deployments to Wildland Fires, supervisors should obtain bottled water from the HOJ-PCD Storeroom or the DOC to provide to officers.


WILLIAM SCOTT
Chief of Police