



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

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For immediate release
Monday, August 19, 2024

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“BURNED: Protecting the Protectors” Now Free to the Public

The groundbreaking documentary has helped ignite the movement to get toxic PFAS chemicals out of firefighter gear.

The documentary film that helped ignite the movement to remove PFAS from fire fighter turnout gear is now available for free to the public.

“BURNED: Protecting the Protectors” profiles Diane Cotter, who suspected forever chemicals were present in turnout gear after her husband, retired Worcester, Massachusetts Local 1009 fire fighter Paul Cotter, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in late 2014. She spent years immersing herself in research while pursuing answers from scientists, corporations, and politicians.

“We thought for years that our cancer was from absorbing the off gases from burning combustibles, building debris. We thought that was what was making us sick. We know now that our own gear is part of that problem,” General President Edward Kelly says in the film.

Director Elijah Yetter-Bowman first met the Cotters while making GenX, a documentary about the PFAS public health crisis. As more research showed the dangers of PFAS in turnout gear, Yetter-Bowman decided to make a documentary educating fire fighters and the public.

“No sensible person would require first responders to knowingly expose themselves to toxic materials as a requirement to do their jobs, but that’s exactly what has happened for decades,” said Yetter-Bowman. “Fire fighters need protective gear that will not poison them. With the IAFF leading the way, I believe we will get there rapidly.”

The 30-minute film can be seen for free [here](#).

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