

# THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPOSURE REPORTING



This factsheet was developed by the International Association of Fire Fighters and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network.



Fire fighters work in uncontrolled environments where they are exposed to many toxic chemicals and hazards at high levels for varying lengths of time.

These exposures have led the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) to classify the occupational exposure as a fire fighter as carcinogenic to humans (Group 1).

Fire fighters should track their own exposures in case they develop an occupational disease or cancer. Fully document all fire or chemical exposures on incident reports and personal exposure reports. Many states have passed presumptive laws that link firefighting with a disease or condition; however, many claims are initially denied. Documentation of the fire fighter's exposure can connect the disease to the documented exposure.

It is up to each fire fighter to take personal responsibility for documenting their daily exposures.

Each fire fighter should establish their own method of capturing and documenting their exposures using department systems or programs like National Fire Operations Reporting System (NFORS). As more states and provinces/territories enact presumptive legislation providing workers' compensation coverage for fire fighters who contract occupational cancer, the NFORS personal exposure record provides a detailed history of work and exposures in an encrypted and secure online environment. For more information, visit [nfors.org](https://nfors.org).

Incident details/history should include:

- Date
- Incident number and incident name (if occurred on an incident)
- Address/location of incident
- Time/duration on incident
- Type of fire/what was burning
- If fluorinated foam was used on the incident
- If visible smoke and/or fire was present
- Which duties/positions you performed on scene of incident

Document as much detail pertaining to the exposure as you can. Exposure records provide needed evidence to support cancer claims.