

BULLETIN

NO.: 24-112
DATE: July 9, 2024
TO: All Personnel
FROM: John Wood, Assistant Fire Chief, Business Operations
David Gerboth, Assistant Fire Chief, Emergency Operations
SUBJECT: Non-Essential Use of Personal Protective Equipment - PFAS

The Health and Safety Office has been monitoring an emerging concern over a group of harmful and possibly carcinogenic chemicals known as "forever chemicals." These per and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were added to elements of our structural firefighting PPE to meet performance requirements outlined in the NFPA 1971 Standard. Current research has shown that PFAS can be found in all three layers of our structural firefighting PPE. We also know these chemicals can be inhaled, ingested, and absorbed.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC) established a PFAS AdHoc Committee to identify and research specific changes. The impacts of implementing these changes are being carefully considered through ongoing discussions between L145 and Management for any employee impacts. We are also developing a future IST to provide information to all Fire-Rescue. The department will incorporate modifications based on a phase-out strategy utilizing the "[concepts for essential use](#)."

The "concepts for essential use" include three criteria:

- Non-essential
- Substitutable
- Essential

SDFD members shall not wear structural firefighting PPE at fundraising events.

This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Fill the Boot
- Memorial Stair Climb
- Annual Mustache
- Cancer Benefit (i.e., Susan G. Komen walk)

SDFD management and IAFF Local 145 agree with limiting PFAS chemical exposure. Attached is the PFAS Advisory Joint Statement from the IAFF and Metro Fire Chiefs.

Don't hesitate to contact the Health and Safety Office at SDFDHealth&Safety@san Diego.gov with comments or areas of improvement. For all other questions, contact cancer and health coordinator engineer David Hunt Cell (619) 318-6652 or email DHunt@san Diego.gov.



The Health & Safety App's QR code
login: SDFD@wellness.com
password: support
24/7 support 833-SDFD-HSO (733-3476)

