



## Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association



Position Statement: Support for 5871 Issued February 27, 2015

### AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL.

*The mission of the CFCA is to promote the position of Chief Fire Officers in Connecticut as the leaders of the fire service through continuing education, unity in the fire service, safety, and professionalism as a fire officer. The association is involved in legislative issues, training, regulatory and many other facets of the fire service. The CFCA represents 463 Chief Fire Officers from across the State of Connecticut.*

The following information is referenced from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

1. **Firefighters can be exposed to contaminants from fires that are known or suspected to cause cancer.** These contaminants include combustion by-products such as benzene and formaldehyde, and materials in debris such as asbestos from older structures.
2. NIOSH, in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute and the Department of Public Health Sciences in the University of California at Davis, **analyzed cancers and cancer deaths through 2009 among 29,993 firefighters** from the Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco fire departments who were employed since 1950. The study was supported in part by funding from the U.S. Fire Administration.
3. A combined population of **30,000 firefighters from three large cities had higher rates of several types of cancers, and of all cancers combined, than the U.S. population as a whole.** These results strengthen the scientific evidence for a relation between firefighting and cancer.
4. Cancers of the respiratory, digestive, and urinary systems accounted mostly for the higher rates of cancer seen in the study population. **The higher rates suggest that firefighters are more likely to develop those cancers.**
5. The population of **firefighters in the study had a rate of mesothelioma two times greater than the rate in the U.S. population** as a whole. This was the first study ever to identify an excess of mesothelioma in U.S. firefighters. The researchers said it was likely that the findings were associated with exposure to asbestos, a known cause of mesothelioma.
6. The primary responsibility of a Fire Chief is the safety and well-being of the fire fighters under his or her charge. Consistent with this responsibility, the **CFCA supports any measures that will protect or care their fire fighters.**

#### For additional information:

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