W3. Contaminants

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#LGAFireConf2024



Fire Contaminants

Presented by: **Prof Anna A Stec** Centre for Fire and Hazards Sciences University of Central Lancashire, UK



A little bit about me.....

- Professor in Fire Chemistry and Toxicity at University of Central Lancashire
- **Specialist** on the **International Agency for Research on Cancer Monographs**, Volume 132 – 'Occupational exposure as a Firefighter', World Health Organization
- Member on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, "The Chemistry of Urban Wildfires", USA
- Grenfell Inquiry Scientific Expert: to determine the fire derived toxicants and related deposits present in the Tower and their origins
- Judith Hackitt Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Working group 6
- Expert Witness on Environmental Audit Committee, Toxic Chemicals in Everyday Life, House of Commons, UK Parliament
- UK's designated principal expert on Fire Chemistry to the ISO Fire Threat to People and the Environment subcommittee (ISO/TC92/SC3)
- European Parliament, MEPs Against Cancer (MAC), European Parliament Interest Group: Addressing the rate of cancers amongst firefighters







Firefighting is carcinogenic

- Widespread use of plastics increases growth and severity of fires.
- Modern materials (plastics etc.) also produce higher concentrations of toxicants.
- Fire smoke is the biggest killer in fires, yet outside mass transport, it is completely unregulated



Building Regulations



HM Government

The Building Regulations 2010



Volume 1: Dwellings

Requirement B1: Means of warning and escape Requirement B2: Internal fire spread (linings) Requirement B3: Internal fire spread (structure) Requirement B4: External fire spread Requirement B5: Access and facilities for the fire service Regulations: 6(3), 7(2) and 38

2019 edition incorporating 2020 and 2022 amendments – for use in England

Working Group 6: Materials, Products, and System Testing Recommendation

Undertake a review of relevant and appropriate standards related to the health and safety of people in and around buildings to ensure that they remain appropriate to known real world hazards and construction technologies, materials

Requirement

Requirement

Means of warning and escape

B1. The building shall be designed and constructed so that there are appropriate provisions for the early warning of fire, and appropriate means of escape in case of fire from the building to a place of safety outside the building capable of being safely and effectively used at all material times.



Gas Phase Halogenated Flame Retardants

- Man-made chemicals,
- Persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT),
- Tend to leach out of polymer during use,
- Hinder or prevent meaningful end-of-life processing
- Added to a flammable plastics, FRs suppress ignition, but don't prevent burning.
- Fire retardants which act in the gas phase often increase fire effluent toxicity.



Global consumption of CFRs according to CFR category in 2019 (taken from https://www.flameretardants-online.com/flame-retardants/market

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Fire Toxicity FR polyamides



S Molyneux, A A Stec and T R Hull,, *The effect of gas phase flame retardants on fire effluent toxicity,* Polymer Degradation and Stability 106, 36-46, (2014).

Fire Toxicity FR polyamides



S Molyneux, A A Stec and T R Hull,, *The effect of gas phase flame retardants on fire effluent toxicity,* Polymer Degradation and Stability 106, 36-46, (2014).

Poly- and per-fluoroalkyl substances





INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS





Firefighters' Working Conditions: Contaminants

- Depend upon:
- 1. Chemical composition of material (fuel type)
 - C, N, Cl, Br, S, (Fire Retardants)
 - Organic composition (Aliphatic or aromatic)
- 2. Ventilation (fire scenarios/conditions)
 - Flaming/non-flaming, ventilation, temperature



Firefighters Exposures





Firefighters Exposures



	CHEMICAL STRUCTURE	IARC	HEALTH OUTCOME
Benzene		1- Carcinogenic	acute myeloid leukemia multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma
PAHs: Benzo[a]pyrene		1- Carcinogenic	Skin, respiratory and digestive system, (oesophagus, bladder)



Firefighters Exposures







A A Stec et al., <u>Scientific Reports</u> volume 8, Article number: 2476 (2018)

Contaminant exposure and increased likelihood of cancer diagnosis



Wolffe, et al., Cancer incidence amongst UK firefighters, Scientific Reports, 2023

The UK Firefighter Contamination Survey

Minimising firefighters' exposure to toxic fire effluents

Interim Best Practice Report

An independent report by uction with a foreword by FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack Commissioned by



Minimiziranje izloženosti vatrogasaca otrovnim efluentima

Minimalizacja narażenia strażaków na toksyczne produkty pożarowe Okresowy Raport Najlepszych Praktyk Niezeżny raport autorstwa uccan z przedmową Sekretarza Generalnego FBU MattaWracka Na zlecenie

KOMENCANT ORDWAY PARSTWOWEJ STRAFY POZARNEJ BKII-075402-321

wg rozdzielnika

Mając na uwadze trwający proces nowelizacji rozporządzenia Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji w sprawie szczególowych warunków bozpieczeństwa Inijeny stuży strzaków Państwowej Strzy Pożarnej, informuję o następuje.

Przedmiotowa nowelizacja wpiorwadzi w obiektach jednostek ristowniczogalniczych Praktowej Struky Potzamej obowiązek wyznacenia strufy czysia i brudnej stanowiącej układ pomieszczeń zapewniąjący wstępne umycie, dezymtekcję pranie odzieży uwyosażbnik, a następnie ponowne umundurowanie i wyposażenie strużaka. Jest to od dawna wyczekkane wprowadzenie w życie jednego z elementów profilaktyći nowotworowi wkród strużków. Ogłoszamie nowelizacji ww. rozporządzenia jest planowane na bieżący rok, natomiast wymagania, o których mowa w istniejących już obiektach przeznacznych dla jednostek ratowniczo-gaśniczych Państwowej Struży Pozarnej wprowadza się do dnia 1 stycznał cz023 r.

W związku z powyższym proszę uwzględnić te bardzo istotne zapisy ełużące poprawie warunków elużby strażaków i sukcesywnie dostosowywać obiekty poprzez dokonanie wymaganych zmian organizacyjnych, modernizacyjnych i planowania budzetowego.

Për minimizimin e ekzpozimit të zjarrfikësve ndaj rrjedhjeve toksike gjatë shuarjes së zjarrit

Minimiziranje izloženosti vatrogasaca otrovnim efluentima

Minimizar a exposição dos bombeiros aos agentes tóxicos provocados pelos incêndios Relatório de boas práticas

m relatório independente apresentado por UCLAN com prefácio do Secretário Geral de FBU, Matt Wrack

Minimalizace expozice hasičů toxickým zplodinám hoření

https://www.fbu.org.uk/publications/minimising-firefighters-exposure-toxic-fire-effluents

Safety Standards and Regulations



84% firefighters often/sometimes attend fires without RPE



Wolffe, et al., Contamination of UK firefighters personal protective equipment and workplaces, Scientific Reports, 2023

Work Conditions and Practices in Norwegian Fire Departments: A Survey on Factors Potentially Influencing Carcinogen Exposure

The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection, Guidance on smoke and chemical diving, Published April 1994, last updated November 2005



The type of SCBA used during

knockdown of fires from outside

of buildings

100 80 60 40 20 0 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s 2010s Never Infrequently Always

Use of SCBAs during overhaul



J. Jakobsen et al., Safety and Health at Work, Volume 11, Issue 4, December 2020, Pages 509-516

Firefighters Occupational Cancers and Diseases





Protecting firefighters from fire toxins



• Oct 2023- Directive EU) 2023/2668 (protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work)

gives a mandate to the European Commission to develop guidelines and mandatory decontamination for every firefighter within two years (when exposed to asbestos).

• Feb 24 - Directive 2004/37/EC (carcinogens, mutagens or reprotoxic substances at work)

....The World Health Organization has classified the occupational exposure of firefighters as carcinogenic.... It is therefore important that the employers of firefighters and emergency services personnel assess, in accordance with Directive 2004/37/EC, the risk of exposure to carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxic substances and that they take the necessary measures to protect the health and safety of those workers.



Short- and Long-Term Sicknesses Leaves





■ %Short Term Term ■ % Long Term

Occupational Health Performance Report April 2021-2022 https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/612/4323894953.pdf

Cause of Sickness Absence – Wholetime Staff (Excluding Scotland)



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Cancer Incidence-Survey Results

Over 4% of UK serving firefighters who responded to the survey have already been diagnosed with cancer.



Scottish male firefighter deaths for 2000-2020.







Firefighters Cancer Mortality Rates

Country	Scotland
Study dates	2000-2020
Oesophageal cancer	2.42 (1.69-3.29)
Stomach cancer	1.30 (0.59-2.29)
Rectal cancer	0.74 (0.29-1.38)
Liver cancer	1.67 (0.83-2.80)
Pancreatic cancer	1.58 (0.86- 2.51)
Lung cancer	1.19 (0.90-1.52)
Skin cancer	1.17 (0.37-2.42)
Prostate cancer	3.80 (2.56-5.29)
Bladder cancer	2.09 (0.89-3.80)
Kidney cancer	1.84 (0.91-3.08)
Mesothelioma	2.14 (0.68-4.43)
Leukaemia	3.17 (1.44-5.58)
All cancers	1.61 (1.42-1.81)



Firefighters Cancer Mortality Rates

Country	Scotland	USA	Canada	Norwegian	France	Spain	Denmark	Sweden
Study dates	2000-2020	1950-2009	1950-1989	1960-2018	1979-2008	2001-2011	1970-2014	1979-1985
Oesophageal cancer	2.42 (1.69-3.29)	1.31 (1.10-1.55)	0.4 (0.05 - 1.43)	1.81 (0.99-3.04)	0.93 (0.67 - 1.27)	1.11 (0.64-1.92)		
Stomach cancer	1.30 (0.59-2.29)	1.06 (0.88-1.27)	0.51 (0.20 - 1.05)	1.26 (0.85-1.80)	1.15 (0.77 - 1.65)	1.32 (0.88-1.98)	1.96 (1.22-3.16)	1.21 (0.62-2.11)
Rectal cancer	0.74 (0.29-1.38)	1.32 (1.07-1.61)	1.71 (0.91-2.93)	1.25 (0.78-1.92)	1.36 (0.86 - 2.04)	1.08 (0.57-2.04)	1.04 (0.58-1.83)	2.07 (0.89-4.08)
Liver cancer	1.67 (0.83-2.80)		0.84 (0.1 - 3.05)	2.79 (1.02-6.08)	1.10 (0.80 - 1.46)	1.01 (0.59-1.74)		1.49 (0.41-3.81)
Pancreatic cancer	1.58 (0.86- 2.51)		1.40 (0.77-2.35)	1.06 (0.66-1.62)	1.27 (0.92 - 1.72)	0.43 (0.21-0.88)		
Lung cancer	1.19 (0.90-1.52)	1.08 (1.02-1.15)	0.95 (0.71-1.24)	0.92 (0.71-1.17)	0.86 (0.74 - 0.99)	0.94 (0.77-1.15)		1.63 (0.75-3.10)
Skin cancer	1.17 (0.37-2.42)	1.05 (0.83-1.31)	0.73 (0.09 - 2.63)	1.43 (0.76-2.45)	0.65 (0.21 - 1.51)	0.63 (0.19-2.10)		
Prostate cancer	3.80 (2.56-5.29)	1.08 (0.97-1.20)	1.32 (0.76 - 2.15)	1.01 (0.76-1.31)	0.54 (0.31 - 0.86)	1.26 (0.67-2.36)	1.89 (1.22-2.93)	
Bladder cancer	2.09 (0.89-3.80)	0.98 (0.80-1.18)	3.16 (0.86-8.08) 1.28 (0.51-2.63)	2.33 (0.76-5.43)	0.73 (0.41 - 1.21)	0.62 (0.32-1.17)		
Kidney cancer	1.84 (0.91-3.08)	1.57 (1.22-2.00)	4.14 (1.66-8.53)	1.07 (0.55-1.87)	0.63 (0.30 - 1.16)	1.18 (0.57-2.44)		
Mesothelioma	2.14 (0.68-4.43)	1.86 (1.10-2.94)		2.77 (0.90-6.47)		0.62 (0.09-4.42)		
Leukaemia	3.17 (1.44-5.58)	2.39 (0.91-7.37)	1.90 (0.52-4.88)	1.11 (0.57-1.94)		0.90 (0.40-2.01)		
All cancers	1.61 (1.42-1.81)	1.12 (1.08-1.16)	1.05 (0.91-1.20)	1.08 (0.98-1.20)	0.95 (0.88-1.02)	1.00 (0.89-1.12)	1.12 (1.00-1.26)	0.96 (0.50-1.67)



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Scottish male firefighter deaths for 2000-2020



Results revealed that:

- Scottish firefighters die from cancers at a younger age: 45-49 compared to the general population (65-69 years old)
- Significant overall excess cancer mortality was found for Scottish firefighters compared to the general population (SMR 1.61x higher).
- Excess cancer mortality was found for:
 - prostate (3.80x higher);
 - myeloid leukaemia (3.17x higher);
 - oesophagus (2.42x higher)
 - urinary system (kidney and bladder) (1.94x higher).
 - unknown behaviour (6.37x higher).
- Significantly higher mortality was found for diseases:
 - acute ischaemic heart diseases (5.27x higher);
 - stroke (2.69 x higher);
 - pulmonary diseases (3.04x higher),
 - renal failure (3.28x higher) and
 - musculoskeletal system diseases (5.64x higher)

Stec et al., Scottish Firefighters Occupational Cancer and Disease Mortality Rates: 2000-2020, Occupational Medicine, 2023

1/2

Scottish male firefighter deaths for 2000-2020

- Firefighters get these cancers earlier in life.
- Multiple exposures and routes of exposure cause likely more than one type of cancer.
- Firefighters get these cancers earlier in life
- Multiple exposures and routes of exposure cause likely more than one type of cancer.

	Peak Mortality Age				
	Scottish Scottis Firefighters Populat				
Cancer of Unknown origin	60 -64	75-79			
Bladder	70 -74	85-89			
Oesophageal	60 -64	75-79			
Kidney	55 -59	80-84			
Leukaemia	65 -69	85-89			
Mesothelioma	60 -64	85-89			
Multiple myeloma	65 -69	85-89			
Cardiac Arrest	60- 64	80-84			

Stec et al., Scottish Firefighters Occupational Cancer and Disease Mortality Rates: 2000-2020, Occupational Medicine, 2023

Workforce and Staffing

Total Firefighters Headcount



FIREFIGHTERS OCCUPATIONAL CANCER

UK Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry

12 000 entries 800 cancers 650 diseases

www.uclan.ac.uk/FCDR

Currently

• Developing preventive health monitoring for the firefighters.

This is done by:

- Firefighters Cancer and Disease Registry
- Clinical markers for number of firefighters cancers and diseases
- Targeted and non-targeted analysis for fire effluents and their metabolites





Firefighters' Most Common Cancers

Cancers	Age (Diagnosis)	Currently have cancer	Stage	Metastasize ?	In Remission	Received Treatment	Treatment type	Treatment length (Years)	Time between diagnosis and treatment (weeks)
Prostate	60	56%	2	21%	41%	79%	40% Surgery 13% Chemotherapy 27% Radiotherapy	4	14
Skin (Non Melanoma)	55	33%	1	7%	40%	88%	71% Surgery 20% Chemotherapy 15% Radiotherapy	5	11
Lymphoma	51	46%	4	18%	59%	84%	20% Surgery 68% Chemotherapy 30% Radiotherapy	2	9
Melanoma	53	22%	2	7%	42%	87%	71% Surgery 11% Chemotherapy 16% Radiotherapy	6	5
Bladder	59	41%	2	9%	63%	89%	74% Surgery 43% Chemotherapy 2% Radiotherapy	5	6



Firefighters deserve the best preventative medical care, education, and support to reduce the risk of cancer.

- Better decontamination policies needed for contaminants
- Preventative health monitoring
- Better data collection on firefighters' cancer and other disease incidence



Percival Pott: First to demonstrate scrotal cancer caused by soot **First preventative Legislation!**





Thank you for your attention aastec@uclan.ac.uk

Firefighters Occupational Cancers and Diseases



Firefighters and cancer

Independent report **Firefighters and cancer: position paper 47**

Published 25 March 2021

Contents Industrial Injuries Advisory

Industrial Injuries Advisory Council

Summary

The House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) in their report 'Toxic Chemicals in Everyday Life' raised concerns about the exposure of firefighters and clean-up workers to toxic chemicals from the Grenfell fire.

This position paper updates

earlier reviews by the Council of the risk of testicular cancer in firefighters (2008) and a commissioned a review into the health effects (malignant and non-malignant) of working as a fire-fighter (2010).

Thus, the Council did not find consistent evidence that the risk of any type of cancer is more likely than not to be due to firefighting i.e. the risk was more than doubled. The exception was mesotnetioma which is atready covered by the scheme. The Council has therefore decided against recommending prescription for cancer in firefighters, but it remains open to the possibility of reviewing its position as the research evidence base continues to grow. The Council is aware of several ongoing studies of exposures and

Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive is a UK government agency responsible for the ADVICE, GUIDE, REGULATION and ENFORCEMENT of workplace health, safety and welfare, and for research into occupational risks in Great Britain.



The development of a 'female' form manikin as part of a test facility to assess the fire protection afforded by personal protective equipment



Prepared by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) for the Health and Safety Executive and Communities and Local Government (CLG) 2008



Respiratory protective equipment at work

A practical guide



ISBN 978 0 7176 6454 2

Registrates at work

version of HSG53 published 05/13 This book provides guidance on the selection and use of adequate and suitable respiratory protective equipment (RPE) in the workplace, in order to comply wit the law.

ou can buy the book at www.hsebooks.co.uk and most bookshops

This is a web-friendly

It tells you when you can use RPE, using a simple step-by-step approach. It helps you to decide the adequate level of protection for a given hazerdous substance and how to select RPE that is subside for the particular waver, task and work environment. It also contains advice on how to make sure that the selected RPE keeps working effectively.

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Health and Safet

6.1 Scheme membership figures

The table below shows the latest available membership figures for the main public service pension schemes:

Public service pension scheme membership

		Membership type			
	Data	Activo	Deferred	Pensions in	
	Date	Active	Deleffed	payment	
UK / Great Britain					
Armed Forces Pension Scheme (UK)	Mar 2020	298,760	519,763	442,954	
Civil Service Pension Scheme (GB)	Mar 2020	510,220	357,830	700,157	
England and Wales					
Teachers Pension Scheme (E&W)	Mar 2019	702,773	638,458	729,471	
NHS Pension Scheme (E&W)	Mar 2020	1,619,853	701,348	962,928	
Local Government Pension Scheme (E&W)	Mar 2020	1,999,960	1,797,912	1,811,720‡	
Firefighters Pension Scheme (England)	Mar 2020	32,519	17,309	46,291 *	
Police Pension Scheme (England and Wales)	Mar 2016	120,673	27,786	152,020	
Scotland					
NHS Superannuation Scheme (Scotland)	Mar 2020	178,092	65,671	110,421	
Teachers Superannuation Scheme (Scotland)	Mar 2020	75,633	23,486	82,604	
LGPS Scotland	approx. (a)	236,000	140,000	169,000	
Police Pension Scheme (Scotland)	Mar 2016	16,599	3,530	16,492	
Firefighters Pension Scheme (Scotland)	Mar 2016	5,580	1,518	5,304	
Northern Ireland					
Civil Service (NI)	Mar 2020	29,265	8,682	31,668	
Local Government (NI)	Mar 2020	68,153	32,316	38,579	
Teachers (NI)	Mar 2020	25,177	16,345	24,523	
Firefighters (NI)	Mar 2020	1,673	299	1,376	

Sources

UK/GB: Civil Superannuation Resource Accounts; AFPS Annual Accounts

England and Wales: Teachers' Pension Scheme (E&W) Annual accounts;NHS Pension Scheme Resource Accounts; LGPS E&W statistics (*Note* ‡ pensioner total includes a small number of 'flexible retirees'); Fire statistics data table FIRE1304 firefighters' pension membership (*Note* * *pensioners* includes age retirement and ill-health retirement pensioners)

NFCC Fire Contaminants Project

Luke.Gazzard@avonfire.gov.uk



NFCC National Fire Chiefs Council







Project Overview

- NFCC have a specific contaminants working group operating under the oversight of the NFCC Health and Safety Committee. The group is taking a holistic approach to the issue and want to ensure that we have a full picture of the situation before advocating for any such policies.
- Conscious of the occupational risk to firefighter health and wellbeing, our priority is the safety of FRS staff and establishing the full picture of how contaminants, PPE, and decontamination procedures all factor into cancer risk.
- Project Toolbox





Work Packages

- 1. Literature Review
- 2. Risk Assessment / Safe Systems of Work
- 3. Estates
- 4. Training and Development
- 5. Health Surveillance
- 6. Personal Protective Equipment
- 7. Respiratory Personal Equipment
- 8. Appliance and Equipment
- 9. National Guidance

NFCC Toolbox for Guidance and Best Practice







NFCC Data Analysis

- Survey design FRSs asked to rate against 160 recommendations
- Survey launch summer 2023 with returns by December 2023
- Each FRS has an overall percentage score based on the proportion of
- recommendations that were started and on track, started and not on track and completed
- Better progress on PPE, Guidance and Personal decontamination practices
- Slower progress on Appliances and equipment
- Not started recommendations are around Health Surveillance and Estates





Project Pipeline

Dedica Websi	Dedicated Toolbox on NFCC Website Early Summer 2024		nces and ment August 2024	RPE	October 2024		
0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Risk Assessment		2024 Trainin 2024	g September	Decem Phase comple	nber 2024 one etion	





Next Steps

- Phase 2 PPE and continual Literature Review
- Dedicated support for FRS with guidance and implementation
- Assurance that best practice is embedded in UK FRS