



EL DORADO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: Monday, October 12, 2020

Date/Time of Occurrence: October 12, 2020

Nature of Occurrence: Firefighter Safety Improving with Additional Safety Gear

Location: 4440 Carson Rd, Camino, CA 95709

Map Link: <https://goo.gl/maps/f1tp2h6bhbkeDgRo6>

Contact: Captain Jacob Poganski

Phone: (530) 644-9630

E-Mail: poganskij@eldofire.com

Camino, CA, October 12, 2020 – El Dorado County Fire Protection District firefighters recently received a long-sought-after second set of turnout gear. This additional safety equipment will increase the level of protection for area firefighters by reducing the likelihood that they will have to re-expose themselves to toxins from contaminated structural firefighting gear.

Firefighting has always been a hazardous job but the flames and heat are no longer the biggest enemy firefighters face. Due to modern construction finishes and home furnishings laden with plastics and exotic metals, fires in today's modern homes present a more sinister environment. Now, not only do home fires spread rapidly from room-to-room, fires are also charged with high concentrations of extremely toxic agents such as poisonous gases and carcinogens. Because of these toxic environments, occupational cancer has become the leading cause of duty-related deaths for firefighters. Up until recently, when local firefighters contaminated their protective gear inside house fires, they often lacked access to a clean second set of firefighting turnouts. This

meant that firefighters were often faced with the need to re-expose themselves to contamination by putting on the soiled protective gear to respond to additional emergencies during the course of a shift.

With a second set of turnouts firefighters will now be able to isolate their contaminated protective gear and have it properly cleaned; all while having access to clean protective equipment. In addition to routine cleaning of protective gear in-house, the turnouts will also receive professional annual inspections and repairs to assure that they remain in compliance with safety standards. Access to clean protective equipment is an important milestone in the endeavor to address health and wellness concerns especially in the area of cancer reduction.

Although this represents a key piece to the puzzle, there are other concerns that the District is working to address to further reduce exposure to firefighters. These measures that include adding additional specialty extractors to fire stations for laundering turnouts.

All of these measures have been challenging to implement not only due to fiscal constraints but also limitations of aging fire stations in many of our communities.

The El Dorado County Fire Protection District provides fire and EMS services in the communities of Placerville, Shingle Springs, Pollock Pines, Camino, Pleasant Valley, Cool, Coloma, Lotus, Pilot Hill, Pleasant Valley, Oak Hill, Strawberry, and Kyburz.



Firefighter Serena and Firefighter Weber are wearing new turnouts that will allow them to fight a fire and have a clean second set waiting at the fire station to change into. This will decrease exposure to toxic carcinogens when firefighters clean up from a fire and return to serving the public during a shift.

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