

MOTION

Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS) are man-made chemicals that have been used in products worldwide since the 1940s. They have been used to make nonstick cookware, water-repellent clothing, stain resistant fabrics and carpets, cosmetics, firefighting foams, and products that resist grease, water, and oil. Scientific studies have shown that exposure to some PFAS in the environment may be linked to harmful health effects in both humans and animals.

PFAS are found in firefighter protective gear and have been linked to cancer, the leading cause of firefighter death. Cancer accounted for more than 74% of line-of-duty deaths in 2022. Recent studies have shown that all three layers of firefighter turnout gear contain PFAS. These studies also highlight the risks associated with the materials and finishes used in turnout gear even before the gear is exposed to its first fire.

Resolution 28 of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) 55th Convention calls on the IAFF to stop accepting sponsorships or advertising from the chemical industry, textile manufacturers or personal protective equipment (PPE) manufacturers that use toxic chemicals, recommends an end of repurposing used or expired PPE and calls on the IAFF to publish information on PFAS based on research by independent scientists with no connections to the PPE industry.

Protecting the health and safety of our city’s fire fighters is unwavering and the work to remove these toxic chemicals from the protective gear must be done.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Fire Department report back on current testing being done, if any, to report the levels of PFAS in firefighter protective gear. This report should include possible outside sources to perform this testing.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Fire Department report back with current plans to remove the hazardous firefighter gear from all inventory and fire stations across the city. This report should include funding needed for new and safe firefighter protective gear.

PRESENTED BY:

MONICA RODRIGUEZ
Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY:

ORIGINAL

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