

# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

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# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

Presentation for you today.

- “Here and now” dangers for firefighters.
- “Long term” health for firefighters.
- Focus on CO, psychological health, cancer.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

Building fires tests to flashover.

30 years ago: 15 min.

Today: 3 min.

More toxics gases.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

“Here and now” safety. -just a few...

- Building collapse.
- Burns- and heat stress.
- CO damage on heart and brain.
- Explosions.
- Too few firefighters on the scene.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

“Here and now” safety. –prevention...

- Knowledge and education.
- Training, training and training.
- The best safety equipment and Personal Protective Gear.
- No cut downs on staff... **Add resources.**



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

Help firefighters to safe life.

What's good for firefighters is good for citizens

Make NO mistake about that...



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## “Long terms” health.

- Heart problems.
- Brain damage.
- Psychological and mental problems such as PTSD, depression, burnout etc.
- Cancers.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

CO damage on heart and brain.

- 22.000.000 people world wide.
- 75-80% firefighters.
- Wrong diagnoses.
- Looks like stroke and/or embolism.
- From all fires and off gassing.





# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

Spot it.

- Headache from ear to ear and neck.
- Gray color. Pail.
- Disoriented.
- Lose consciousness.



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No action.

- Like stroke.
- Loss of memory.
- Speech difficulties.
- Symptoms occurs within 48 hours.
- No treatment = too late.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

What to do.

- ALWAYS oxygen therapy in pressure tank.
- Within four hours.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Psychologic damages.

- PTSD.: 17 - 30% firefighters show symptoms.
- Anxiety disorder: 20 – 23% in ambulance personal.
- Clinical depression: 8 – 21% in both groups.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Why?

- Nature og the job.
- Culture in the organization.
- Lack of recognition and backup from the leadership within the organization.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## What to do for prevention.

- Change of attitude in the organization. (Not on the scene).
- Make systems to psychologic defusing and debriefing.
- Make it ok to talk about how you feel.
- We are all the same. Brothers and sisters.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Cancer

Cancers kills more firefighters than actually “death in the line of duty”.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Why?

- Work at night.
- Chemical cocktail.
- Personal Protective Gear.
- Psychological health.

Not avoidable 100%





# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## CARCINOGENS from all fires.

- Benzene
- PAH's -Polycyclic Aromatic Hydro Carbons
- Diesel Particulates
- Formaldehyde
- Dioxin
- Sod
- (Asbestos)



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

How?

- Absorption through breathing.
- Absorption through the skin.
- Contaminated gear.
- Contaminated fire station.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Ocopational risk.

- No protection is 100%
- Clean all gear. – Make procedures.
- Clean fire house. – Clean and “not” clean areas.
- Healthy living.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Legislation.

- Politicians.
- Canada.
- USA.
- Australia.

### PRIMARY SITE CANCERS

### MINIMUM PERIOD OF REGULAR EXPOSURE TO THE HAZARDS OF A FIRE SCENE

Primary leukemia	5 years
Primary site brain cancer	10 years
Primary site bladder cancer	15 years
Primary site lung cancer in non-smokers	15 years
Primary site ureter cancer	15 years
Primary site kidney cancer	20 years
Primary site colorectal cancer	20 years
Primary site testicular cancer	20 years
Primary site esophageal cancer	25 years
A primary non-Hodgkin's lymphoma	20 years
A primary site prostate cancer	15 years
A primary site skin cancer	15 years
A primary site breast cancer	10 years
Multiple myeloma	15 years

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Who is the first in Europe?

- Lithuania?
- Germany?
- France?
- Sweden?
- Denmark?



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# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

## Firefighters cooperate

- In Nordic countries.



# Long terms health problems for firefighters in Europe

- In European countries.





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Help firefighters to safe life.

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Make NO mistake about that...

Thank you

