

Miller, Diane M. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)

From: FFUS-Comments
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2008 2:35 PM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
Cc: Chen, Jihong (Jane) (CDC/NIOSH/EID) (CTR); Doyle, Glenn (CDC/NIOSH/EID)
Subject: 141 - FFUS Comments

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Comments

Preventing Injuries and Deaths of Fire Fighters - NIOSH ALERT:September 1994 - DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 94-125 states: "Accountability for all fire fighters at the scene is one of the fire command's most important duties." and concludes:

"CONCLUSIONS

"Although many factors contributed to the deaths and injuries reported here, they might have been prevented if these essential steps had been taken:

- ** Following established fire-fighting policies and procedures**
- * Implementing an adequate respirator maintenance program**
- * Establishing fire fighter accountability at the fire scene**
- * Using PASS devices at the fire scene**

"These precautionary steps are well known to fire departments and fire fighters, but they require constant emphasis to assure the safety of fire fighters.

NIOSH should consider including this NIOSH recommendation for the use of a firefighter accountability system in the new "Alert."

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From: FFUS-Comments
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2008 2:15 PM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
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You should consider including the recommendations from NIOSH - Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation Investigative Report #99F-47:

"Recommendation #10: Fire departments should identify dangerous vacant buildings by affixing warning placards to entrance doorways or other openings where fire fighters may enter.1

"Discussion: Vacant buildings can and do pose numerous hazards to fire fighters' health and safety. Hazards should be identified and warning placards affixed to entrance doorways or other openings to warn fire fighters of the potential dangers. Hazards can be structural as the result of building deterioration or damage from previous fires. Structural hazards can occur when building owners or salvage workers remove components of the building such as doors, railings, windows, electric wiring, utility pipes, etc. Abandoned materials such as paper and flammable or hazardous substances and collapse hazards constitute additional dangers fire fighters may encounter. Collapse hazards can be chimney tops, parapet walls, slate and tile roof shingles, metal and wood fire escapes, advertising signs, and entrance canopies. For example, a warning placard may be a 12-inch-square piece of metal painted reflective yellow so that it glows in the dark and indicates to fire fighters that hazards exist inside the building. Following are examples of warning placards developed and used by the New York City Fire Department."

The NIOSH text included a diagram, which will not import into this document. You should refer to the NIOSH report for the original diagram.

"REFERENCES

1. Dunn V [2000]. Vacant building fires. Firehouse Magazine. May 2000, pp. 20-26."

These markings not only warn firefighters, but also put those persons seeking shelter on notice of the dangerous condition of the building, and that the firefighters will not routinely search this building for possible occupants.

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From: FFUS-Comments
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2008 11:53 AM
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As a document promulgated by the CDC, this alert seems lacking in steps for the emergency medical care and transportation of firefighters injured at an incident. Specifically, on page iii, and page 7, there are lists of steps that fire departments should take to protect firefighters. This list should include the following bullets under the RIT bullet:

- Stage fire apparatus with a minimum of 12 firefighters, within 5 minutes driving time of the incident, to respond in the event of an emergency.
- Stage an Emergency Medical Services team, preferably at the Paramedic level, with the Rapid Intervention Team to treat any sick or injured firefighters. Ideally this team should be trained and equipped to treat the effects of cyanide poisoning, in addition to their normal capabilities.
- Stage at least 2 ambulances, preferably at the Paramedic level, within 5 minutes driving time of the incident, to respond in the event of an emergency.
- Notify the nearest Emergency Room whenever firefighters are operating at any structure fire, so that they may prepare for a sudden influx of casualties. The fire department should update the Emergency Room, as soon as possible, when the incident commander learns of the possibility of either firefighter or civilian casualties.