

A Resolution to Address a New Epidemic: Smoke Inhalation

Offered by:
Fire Engineering

WHEREAS, 30,564 people died from smoke inhalation in the United States between 1997 and 2006; and

WHEREAS, deaths from residential fires are the fifth most common cause of unintentional injury deaths in the United States and the third leading cause of fatal injury; and

WHEREAS, mounting proof obtained through atmospheric monitoring on fire grounds throughout the United States confirms that Hydrogen Cyanide is a predominate, deadly toxicant in fire smoke; and,

WHEREAS, in the face of fire, civilians, firefighters and first responders are being exposed to Hydrogen Cyanide in fire smoke due to the modern products of combustion such rubbers, synthetics, laminates and foams; and

WHEREAS, acute and chronic exposure to Hydrogen Cyanide experienced by first responders assault s the heart, brain and thyroid, causing illness, disease, neurological disorders and cardiac-related fatalities; and,

WHEREAS, 46 states have presumptive legislation in place to medically care for firefighters diagnosed with illness and disease and with the appropriate focus on Hydrogen Cyanide, exposures can be minimized with appropriate education and training; and,

WHEREAS, with appropriate training and education first responders will learn how to provide appropriate pre-hospital treatment for Hydrogen Cyanide in fire smoke - not only to firefighters, but to the civilian population, and reduce the statistics for smoke inhalation illness and death.

THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED, preventing exposure to Hydrogen Cyanide and understanding medical treatment for Hydrogen Cyanide poisoning related to fire smoke is an effective means to reducing death, illness and disease statistics within the civilian and firefighter populations due to smoke inhalation.

RESOLVED, that the CFSI fully supports the advancement of educational objectives to achieve a national educational program about Hydrogen Cyanide awareness as it relates to smoke inhalation to reduce civilian and firefighter deaths from smoke inhalation in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the CFSI supports efforts to develop Hydroxocobalamin treatment protocols that can be adopted by all local and state EMS regulatory authorities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the CFSI supports efforts to work with the Bureau of Justice Assistance to adopt the 2008 USFA Firefighter Autopsy Protocols to appropriately document cause of death as it may pertain to Hydrogen Cyanide exposure in fire smoke; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the CFSI supports efforts to work with the CDC to establish a national database for smoke inhalation injuries, medical complications and deaths that recognizes Hydrogen Cyanide as a contributing factor to the illness or death to provide public safety and medical agencies with a valuable life-saving tool.