


To the Mayor and Members of the City Council
February 15, 2022

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SUBJECT: CANCER MITIGATION EFFORTS IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Following a October 22, 2019 briefing by the Fire Department and Risk Management, City Council appropriated \$1.275 million from the Risk Management Fund to address cancer mitigation in the Fort Worth Fire Department (M&C 20-0043). The proposed strategies and estimated funding presented in the M&C are outlined in the table below. Also included is the actual funding used and justification if it differs significantly from the proposed plan.

Cancer Prevention Program Funding - \$1,275,000

Equipment	Proposed Funding	Purchased	Amount Spent	Notes
Extractor cleaners	\$180,000	1 Extractor (\$27,671) and 2 gear dryers (\$20,200). Plumbing/electrical upgrades (\$53,550) to accommodate these items were charged to Fire's General Fund	\$47,871	The plumbing/electrical upgrade costs provided through PMD were \$53,550 to accommodate the one extractor at the Fire Department's Supply Warehouse on Bolt Street. Due to these costs, Fire was not able to accommodate additional extractors at other Fire facilities without negatively impacting the ability to procure the items below. These upgrades were charged to Fire's General Fund.
SCBA Harness Washing System	\$25,000	1 SCBA Harness Washer	\$24,461	
Additional Structural Fire Gear	\$300,000	116 Sets (Coats/Pants)	\$297,731	
Nonstructural Firefighting Gear	\$460,000	842 Sets of Nonstructural Gear and 705 pairs of Nonstructural Firefighting Boots	\$748,881	Boots were a total of \$129,461 and Lightweight Gear totaled \$619,420
Particulate Hoods	\$100,000	1,250 Hoods	\$95,000	
Fire Gear Locker Covers	\$90,000	N/A	0	This project was deferred in order to accommodate the other cancer project needs in this table.
Weatherproof Coats	\$90,000	582 Weatherproof Coats	\$54,460	



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Extrication Gloves	\$30,000	2,000 Pairs of Extrication Gloves		These costs (\$15,887) were later journalled to Fire's General Fund on 5/21/2021 in order to accommodate the extractor and gear dryers because the units are considered capital equipment, and therefore, needed to be paid for by the Cancer Project as opposed to the GF.
TOTAL	\$1,275,000		\$1,268,404	

Ultimately, two of the projects were not completed as planned and budgeted: purchase of six extractors and the purchase and installation of locker covers. The funding dedicated to those two projects was used toward the purchase of non-structural fire gear, which aligned with the intent of this project to reduce the risk of cancer among Fort Worth's fire fighters.

Purchase of Exactors

The approved budget included the installation of six extractors to establish a gear cleaning system in each district of the city. These were budgeted at \$30,000 each for the purchase of equipment and installation (\$180,000 for the entire project). However, the installation of the first unit cost approximately \$83,000. This overage was largely due to increased costs incurred with the Property Management Facility Maintenance Division for required upgrades to the plumbing and electrical infrastructure. It is important to note that due to recent changes in both plumbing and electrical requirements of newer model extractors have helped reduce these costs.

Purchase of Locker Covers

After further consideration and consultation with fire fighters, the decision was made to not pursue the purchase and installation of locker covers. The benefit of these covers preventing exposure of gear to diesel exhaust in fire station truck rooms is no longer a necessity due to the clean emission standards that regulate a vast majority of the fire department fleet. In addition to the clean emissions these gear locker covers could negatively impact the ability of the bunker gear to naturally off-gas the carcinogens that might remain on the gear. Further, efforts to open and remove covers from gear lockers may negatively impact response times and lack the full acceptance of fire fighters.

Funding of these projects resulted in a systematic reduction of carcinogen exposure. Fire fighters are now encouraged and equipped to wear lighter weight protective gear, weatherproof coats, and extrication gloves rather than their structural fire fighting gear where appropriate. This provides that firefighters can use their structural fire fighting gear for fighting structural fires and the lightweight gear for the various other incidents that they are called to remedy including motor vehicle accidents, emergency medical incidents, technical rescues, grass fires, etc.

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At this time, 116 sets of additional structural fire fighting gear have been procured and are deployed to all working structure fires by a specialized support unit, Gear Exchange and Rehab 1, GEAR 1, to exchange contaminated gear at the scene of structural fires. This gives the firefighters the ability to immediately exchange their contaminated gear for clean gear before leaving the fire scene while the contaminated gear is then transported back to our now dual capacity supply house to be cleaned. Additionally, specialized equipment has been purchased and installed to permit the cleaning of structural fire fighting equipment, including air packs. All of these efforts have been supported, promoted, and encouraged by Fire Department command staff, City Management, Mayor, and Council.

Extractor Donations

As outlined above, higher costs than anticipated to upgrade plumbing and electrical infrastructure at fire department facilities required a shift in how the cancer mitigation funds were expended, and the installation of gear cleaning extractors at all six identified department facilities did not occur.

The Fort Worth Fire Service Resource Network, a not-for-profit organization with a vision to be the global leader in firefighter cancer support, awareness and education, has worked to identify donors who want to fund six (6) extractor systems and the associated costs to install the units. This donation is valued at approximately \$96,000.00 and will continue to support the Fire Department's cancer prevention efforts. Fire fighters will be able to clean structural fire fighting gear at a station within their battalion after it becomes contaminated at smaller incidents where the gear exchange unit may not have been requested and without waiting for a scheduled cleaning.

The Fire Department will request authorization to accept this donation of gear cleaning extractors and installation services coordinated by the Fort Worth Fire Service Resource Network at a future City Council meeting. Any questions regarding any of the projects outlined above or the ongoing cancer prevention efforts of the Fire Department may be directed to Fire Chief Jim Davis at jim.davis@fortworthtexas.gov.

David Cooke
City Manager