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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagler County Fire Rescue receives \$30,000 state grant for cancer decontamination equipment

September 25, 2024 – Flagler County Fire Rescue (FCFR) received a grant for nearly \$30,000 from the Florida State Fire Marshal’s Office for cancer decontamination equipment, specifically for two personal protective equipment washers and extractors.

“When materials burn, they release carcinogens – cancer-causing agents – including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which is a group of more than 100 chemicals,” said Fire Chief Mike Tucker. “Exposure to some of them can cause cancer. We firefighters may also encounter other carcinogens such as asbestos. In short, it’s a big deal to get a grant for decontamination equipment.”

Clearly, being a firefighter is a job that comes with risks. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society notes that personal protective equipment lessens exposure but “toxic chemicals can still penetrate the turnout gear and expose the skin to toxins,” which is then absorbed.

“Members of FCFR willingly put their lives on the line daily, so we want to do everything we can to keep our team as safe as possible,” Tucker said. “Firefighters are at a much greater risk for cancer.”

Flagler County will be required to provide 25% non-state matching funds.

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