

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of July 10, 2024

To: Board of Directors
From: Dan Mahoney, Fire Chief
Subject: California Assembly Bill 2408 Update

RECOMMENDATION

The Board receives report and directs Staff as necessary.

DISCUSSION

At the June 12, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting, the Board asked Staff to bring back information on Assembly Bill 2408 (AB 2408). AB 2408 seeks to address the issue of perfluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in firefighter “Personal Protective Equipment” (PPE). PFAS are a group of human-made chemicals known for their presence in the environment and potential adverse health effects. This bill aims to phase out the use of PFAS in “ALL” firefighter PPE. Firefighters wear various types of PPE, depending on the type of incident. For example, firefighters wear different gear for a structure fire vs. a wildland fire.

PFAS have been used in various industries due to their water and stain-resistant properties. However, growing evidence links PFAS to serious health issues, including cancer, hormone disruption, and immune system effects. Firefighters are particularly at risk due to their repeated exposure to PFAS through their gear and work environments.

The existing law requires any person who sells firefighter PPE to provide written notice to the purchaser if the equipment contains intentionally added perfluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The seller must retain a copy of the written notice and provide the notice to specified law enforcement entities, including the Attorney General, upon request.

AB 2408 has passed the House and is now in the Senate. It still needs to be reviewed by multiple committees, with opportunities for amendments to be made before a final bill is presented to Governor Newsom. The current draft bill is attached (Attachment #1). Ultimately, AB 2408 will prohibit the sale of all firefighter PPE with intentionally added PFAS chemicals by July 1, 2026, as noted below in the draft bill:

- Commencing July 1, 2026, would prohibit a person from manufacturing, knowingly selling, offering for sale, distributing for sale, distributing for use, or ~~using~~ *purchasing or accepting for future use* in this state firefighter personal protective equipment containing ~~PFAS~~ *intentionally added PFAS chemicals*. The bill would make a violation of this provision subject to the civil penalty provisions described above. The bill would specify that an individual firefighter shall not be personally liable for payment of the civil penalty.

If passed, AB 2408 will have known and unknown impacts on the Department. Some of these are:

Known

- Reduce firefighter exposure to PFAS chemicals in firefighter PPE.
- New PFAS-free turnouts are expected to cost \$1000 more per set.
- The Department currently owns 72 sets of Structure Fire PPE.
- The current Structure Fire PPE replacement schedule begins in 2026 when $\frac{1}{3}$ (24 sets) of the PPE is due for replacement. The other $\frac{2}{3}$ (48 sets) will be replaced in 2028 and 2030.

Unknown

- It is still unknown what issues, if any, will arise with the supply and demand for PFAS-free PPE.
- The performance of PFAS-free PPE is still being field tested, and data on performance is limited at this time. Health and Safety studies are currently underway.
- The Department is still evaluating the financial impacts of all PPE other than Structure Fire gear as the Structure gear is expected to have the greatest impacts.

The Department will continue to monitor the progress of AB 2408 and provide updates to the Board as necessary. The Board also has the opportunity to provide staff with any further direction.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment #1 – California-2023-AB2408-Amended