

USFA RELEASES NEW FIREFIGHTER AUTOPSY PROTOCOL

EMMITSBURG, MD. - The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has issued an updated edition of the Firefighter Autopsy Protocol (PDF, 2.6 Mb) manual. Extensively revised since the original 1994 edition, the manual addresses additional areas related to the conduct of autopsies and considers emerging issues and new technologies.

“The updated Firefighter Autopsy Protocol manual is intended to advance the analysis and understanding of the causes of firefighter deaths and contribute to the future development of improved health and safety standards, operational procedures, and technology for our nation’s firefighters,” said U.S. Fire Administrator Greg Cade. “With the continued development in our understanding of the causes of firefighter fatalities, we can all work toward preventing them in the future.” Each year an average of one hundred firefighters lose their lives. This protocol provides general background related to the conduct of autopsies as well as additional information where current autopsy practices may be supplemented to ascertain causes and mechanisms of firefighter fatalities. It includes discussion on the examination of personal protective clothing as well as toxicological evaluations. The manual recommends that autopsies be performed for all firefighter fatalities where a line-of-duty death has occurred.



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