



IN BRIEF



Tassie alert

The Tasmanian alert about toxic gasses and airborne particles is a reminder about these major hazards for firefighters. "That's why access to the most effective protective equipment is a must," says Peter Marshall.



UFUA National website

It's a good spot to visit. New stories are posted each week, with regular OH&S updates from around Australia and across the world. Find it at <http://ufua.asn.au>.



Firefighter Magazine

Get a copy at work or download it from the website. "There are holes in regulations governing the transport of hazardous materials and a push to water down sprinkler regulations," says Peter Marshall. "Details are in the current edition."

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KEEP THAT MOTOR RUNNING? NOT LIKELY, AS DIESEL EXHAUST IS FULL OF CARCINOGENS/ DLANE

Filter it

It's not just the large particulates in diesel exhaust that are a hazard; finer particles can also be killers

Diesel exhaust is dangerous. The IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) classifies diesel exhaust as a type 2A mixture, one that is probably carcinogenic to humans.

"There's an issue with the current approach to diesel exhaust emissions," says UFUA National Secretary, Peter Marshall. "Most states and territories follow the NSW standard, which deals with only large particulate matter. However, diesel exhaust contains highly toxic finer particles that aren't removed by filters available in Australia."

In Victoria, the CFA has agreed to trial new

in-line diesel exhaust filters on trucks at Geelong and Mornington fire stations. However, US manufactured advanced filters, designed specifically for fire and rescue vehicles, aren't shipped to Australia because of the lack of an importer.

"It appears that newer diesel engines create more small exhaust particles than older vehicles," says Peter Marshall. "Expert research concludes these smaller particles present some of the highest health risks. That's why we're working to trial these advanced filters; all Australian firefighters must be effectively protected from exposure to diesel exhaust."

TAS PROTECTION CAMPAIGN

The UFUA Tasmania Branch is circulating a poster warning firefighters of the dangers of toxic gases and airborne particles at fire scenes.

"After the flames, the hazard remains; this is a key message on the poster and it ties in well with the Union's presumptive protection campaign," says Peter Marshall. "The UFUA wants firefighters in every state and territory

to be covered by legislation or regulation to provide uncontested support and compensation for firefighters who contract work-related illness or disease."

Produced by the Tasmanian Fire Service, after prompting by the local Health and Safety Committee, the poster stresses the importance of appropriate ppe and respiratory equipment, even after a fire has been extinguished.