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JB Pritzker, Governor



NEWS

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Illinois Department of Labor, IL OSHA Releases Report Following Investigation of Injuries to Firefighters

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Labor’s (IDOL) Division of Occupational Safety and Health released its report following the investigation of an apartment fire that left three firefighters seriously injured.

The [report](#) aims to serve as a learning resource for the Illinois Fire Service and details an incident in 2021 during which three firefighters were hospitalized after calling a mayday and bailing out the second floor of an apartment building fire.

Key factors that contributed to the firefighters’ injuries were a lack of initial incident command, search and rescue operations taking place above an active fire without fire suppression in place, and firefighters performing search and rescue operations in zero visibility without a hoseline or tagline.

The report identifies 15 indirect causes of the incident and provides 19 recommendations to reduce the chances of a similar outcome in the future. The affected employer, a small municipal fire department, was issued eight citations for violations of the fire brigades standard and respiratory protection standard. Two citations were classified as repeat violations with monetary penalties.

“The incident report was written for rank-and-file firefighters, fire officers, chiefs and elected officials. It is a case study that highlights the importance of establishing strong, initial, and assertive incident command, and matching tactics and strategies to available capabilities. Fire departments should look at the circumstances this department faced and apply it to their operational picture,” said **IL OSHA Acting Division Manager Erik Kambarian**.

IL OSHA inspects municipal fire departments and fire protection districts across Illinois due to the highly hazardous environments in which firefighters work. The Division also investigates incidents where firefighters are seriously injured or killed and determines if any violations of the Illinois Occupational Safety and Health Act occurred.

Occupational safety and health standards enforcement for employers in Illinois is a shared responsibility between the U.S. Department of Labor (federal OSHA) and the Illinois Department of Labor (IL OSHA). Federal OSHA, an Administration under the U.S. Department of Labor, covers all private sector workplaces while IL OSHA, a Division of the Illinois Department of Labor, covers all state and local government workplaces.

For more information about IL OSHA and to download the report, click [here](#).