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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services

### **PROVINCE RECOGNIZES FIREFIGHTERS' LUNG CANCER RISK**

VICTORIA – The Province has introduced an amendment to the Workers Compensation Act to add primary site lung cancer for non-smokers to the list of cancers already recognized as occupational diseases for firefighters, Labour and Citizens' Services Minister Iain Black announced today.

“Firefighters can be exposed to dangerous toxic fumes in the course of their duties, and occasionally that exposure may lead to cancer,” said Black. “This change helps firefighters and their families by streamlining eligibility for workers’ compensation benefits, and delivers on last year’s promise to add lung cancer for non-smokers as the ninth cancer recognized as an occupational disease for B.C. firefighters.”

The firefighters’ occupational disease regulation recognizes certain types of cancers as occupational diseases associated with long-term employment as a firefighter. Full-time, volunteer, part-time and paid on-call firefighters qualify for this coverage. If passed, the amendment adding lung cancer for non-smokers will be retroactive to May 27, 2008.

“The British Columbia Professional Fire Fighters’ Association is pleased the government is amending legislation to recognize additional occupational cancers for firefighters,” said association president Michael Hurley. “Firefighters across British Columbia are benefitting from the steps this government is taking to recognize the risks to firefighters and making the necessary changes to help them and their families.”

The Province first recognized certain cancers as occupational diseases linked to firefighting in 2005. Cancers already recognized are primary site brain cancer, primary site bladder cancer, primary site kidney cancer, primary non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, primary site ureter cancer, primary site colorectal cancer, primary leukemia and primary site testicular cancer.

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