

Illinois Department of Labor, IL OSHA Release Report as a Learning Tool Following Investigation of Firefighter Death

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Labor's (IDOL) Division of Occupational Safety and Health (IL OSHA) has released an incident report following the closure of an inspection and investigation of an apartment fire that left one firefighter dead.

The [Marmora Incident Report](#) serves as an educational resource for the Illinois Fire Service while also detailing an incident in December 2021 that ultimately took the life of a firefighter.

The firefighter, who had recently celebrated his one-year anniversary at the affected fire department, was alone on the first floor of the building when he experienced a life-threatening malfunction of his self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and called for a mayday (firefighter in distress). The firefighter was found unresponsive and out of air and rushed to a hospital. He died from his injuries five days later.

IL OSHA determined there were several contributing factors that led to the death:

- The initial fire suppression team did not enter together and stay together.
- No other members in the structure or on scene had communication with the firefighter when he suffered a life-threatening emergency.
- There was a delay between the firefighter in distress declaring a mayday and the incident commander confirming a mayday emergency.

“Interior firefighters must enter as a team, stay together, and exit as a team,” **said IL OSHA Chief Erik Kambarian**. “Fire department leaders, incident commanders, and officers must ensure firefighters never operate alone in building fires.”

IL OSHA made several specific, actionable recommendations to reduce the risk of a similar incident. These recommendations are not only for the affected fire department, but also the entire Illinois Fire Service.

IL OSHA issued the affected fire department a citation with four violations of the Illinois Occupational Safety and Health Act in June of 2022 that required corrective action. The inspection was held open for over a year to observe mandatory and voluntary improvements implemented by the fire department.

IL OSHA inspects municipal fire departments and fire protection districts across Illinois due to the highly hazardous environments in which firefighters work. The Division’s focus is to identify lessons from incidents and then share those lessons with the Illinois Fire Service so that lessons identified become lessons learned.

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.

