



Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, IAFF Local 341

NEWS from Houston Fire Fighters

1907 Freeman Street, Houston, Texas 77009 | 713.223.9166 | local341.org

HPFFA Statement Regarding NIOSH Report on May 2013 Fire

Houston Fire Fighters Urge Adoption of Report Recommendations, Cite Continuing Concerns

HOUSTON, July 20, 2015 – *The following statement was issued by Alvin W. White, Jr., president of the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, IAFF Local 341, regarding the report by the CDC National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) on the catastrophic 2013 Southwest Inn Fire in Houston:*

“Houston fire fighters appreciate the resources committed by NIOSH to the investigation of the May 31, 2013 fire at the Southwest Inn in Houston. This 106-page report comprehensively addresses the factors at the fire that contributed to the deaths of four Houston fire fighters and the injuries of 16 others.

“Houston fire fighters remain concerned about the HFD equipment, policies and training, and staffing issues raised in the NIOSH report. We note that while the report cites numerous revisions of HFD procedures made since the 2013 fire, the department has not actually implemented several of the cited revisions. The truth is, we still face staffing shortages, systemic radio failures and other technology problems, an aging fleet and facilities, and inconsistent provision of training.

“HFD is a world-class department in many respects, but seven fire fighters have died in the line of duty in four catastrophic incidents during the Parker Administration. Because of the current environment at City Hall, HFD is too politically timid and reactive to major incidents. More must be done to better and proactively ensure fire fighter and public safety. Our obligations to our lost – Robert Bebee, Robert Garner, Matthew Renaud, and Anne Sullivan – and the 16 injured fire fighters demand that lessons be learned from their sacrifices. For that reason, we urge HFD to immediately adopt the 15 recommendations in the NIOSH report and the recommendations of the 2014 HFD Recovery Committee report on the incident.”

The NIOSH report is available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/reports/face201316.html>.

CONTACTS:

T. Scott Wilkey
HPFFA Communications Director
communicationsdirector@local341.org
713.223.9166 or 713.899.3726

Erin Powers
Powers MediaWorks LLC for the HPFFA
info@powersmediaworks.com
281.703.6000