



MILPITAS FIRE DEPARTMENT

777 South Main Street, Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 586-2800 Fax (408) 942-3269

Serving the citizens of Milpitas

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Geoff Maloon, Battalion Chief, 408-586-2818

SUBJECT: Milpitas Firefighters, Family Diagnosed with Coronavirus (COVID-19), Others in Quarantine

DATE: March 23, 2020

The Milpitas Fire Department has learned that two firefighters and one family member have tested positive for COVID-19. The affected firefighters and the spouse are in self quarantine at home and have not required hospitalization.

On March 21, 2020, one firefighter informed the Milpitas Fire Department's Designated Infection Control Officer (DICO) that he had received a positive test result for the Novel Coronavirus. On March 22, the DICO was informed by another firefighter that he had also tested positive.

The source of the infection has not yet been determined, but Milpitas Fire Department is working with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department to determine the source. Five City firefighters in total were exposed to the first infected firefighter during the course of duties, including one who also tested positive, three who are symptomatic but have not received positive test results, and one who shows no symptoms. All firefighters who were exposed have been placed in self quarantine at home for 14 days. One of the exposed firefighters has been tested and is awaiting results, while two with symptoms will be tested today.

Additionally, one Milpitas fire recruit engaged in fire academy training was exposed to a separate confirmed case, and has symptoms consistent with Covid-19. The recruit is currently being self-quarantined at home for 14 days from the onset of symptoms.

The Milpitas Fire Department has protocols in place to limit or prevent the spread of infection between patients and fire personnel. Fire personnel follow these protocols during all treatment and interaction with residents. The Milpitas Fire Department is working internally and with County Public Health to identify a limited number of individuals who may have come into contact with the infected Fire Department personnel, and will contact those individuals directly.

“It is our belief that there is very little chance of infection to the public,” said Milpitas Fire Chief Brian Sherrard. “My priorities right now are the safety of the residents in our community and our first responders who serve them. Our firefighters take their oath very seriously, so it's difficult during an unprecedented time like this to quarantine to stay safe, but that's exactly what we are doing.”

“The Milpitas Fire Department trains for this very occurrence, and our crews are doing everything they can to ensure safety,” continued Chief Sherrard. “I can assure you, as a father of two young adults in the state as well as having elderly parents considered part of our vulnerable population, I take this very seriously. We, as a department, are committed to preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus and protecting the residents of Milpitas.”

Due to health privacy rights, the City is unable to provide any information about the identity of the affected employees or their family members.

#

About the City of Milpitas

Located at the southern end of San Francisco Bay, Milpitas is a progressive community that is an integral part of Silicon Valley. A full-service city with water utility, sewer utility, police and fire services, Milpitas celebrates a diverse population of nearly 80,000. Under a Council-Manager form of government, the City Council has established the following seven priority areas of service and policy: public safety, environment, transportation and transit, economic development and job growth, neighborhoods and housing, community wellness and open space, and governance and administration.

More information at: <http://www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov/>