



# PREVENTING FIREFIGHTERS FROM GETTING RESPIRATORY DISEASE

## ABOUT COEH

The Northern California Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH) is 1 of 18 Education and Research Centers (ERCs) funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Along with research and outreach, **COEH trains healthcare providers in preventing and managing work-related illnesses** through programs at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) in occupational nursing and medicine.

## FOR MORE INFO



Scan the QR code for more information

For questions, contact [coeh@berkeley.edu](mailto:coeh@berkeley.edu)

## BACK-STORY

A **62-year firefighter woke up one morning unable to catch his breath**. A married father of two, he had otherwise been in good shape, and enjoyed playing sports on the weekends. But this felt different. Climbing a simple flight of stairs quickly became too much. Turned out he had respiratory disease from inhaling chemicals on the job.

## WHAT IS RESPIRATORY DISEASE?

**Respiratory disease is any illness or disorder affecting the lungs and airways, the organs and tissues involved in breathing.** There can many causes such as inhaling chemicals, air pollution, infections, and more.

## WHAT WE FOUND

As wildfires invade our local neighborhoods, **more and younger firefighters are getting sick**. Luckily for this man, his doctor had received **training under the NIOSH-funded Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH), designed to teach physicians how to prevent and manage work-related injuries and illnesses.**

## HOW COEH TRAINING HELPED

The specialized training **helped doctors understand how to treat his disease and got him back on the line as quickly as possible**, which was what he wanted most. Firefighting is his life. Critically, COEH also helps doctors share information with other firefighters so they **have the protective equipment and knowledge** to protect themselves from getting similar respiratory injuries.

We promote healthy workplaces and environments that protect workers and communities from occupational and environmental health hazards through teaching, research, and service.

