



TOWN OF CLAYTON
COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

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CLAYTON FIRE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZED AS TOP LEADER IN FIREFIGHTER HEALTH

CLAYTON, NC – The Clayton Fire Department has earned Gold Helmet Status, a recognition that highlights its commitment to firefighter safety and well-being.

This status is awarded to fire departments where a large portion of firefighters participate in the National Firefighters Cancer Registry, a program supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Fewer than 120 departments nationwide have reached this level, and Clayton is one of only three in North Carolina, placing it among the top departments in the country for proactive firefighter health.

The registry is a free tool that allows firefighters to log each fire or training exposure, building a complete career health profile. Firefighters can link this information to their medical records, giving doctors a clear picture of potential risks. If a firefighter is diagnosed with cancer, the registry provides a documented record that can support medical care and any related claims.

Battalion Chief of Safety and Training Chris Carter explained how the program supports the team. "This program gives our firefighters a proactive way to monitor their health and track exposures throughout their careers. It is part of our commitment to keeping every team member safe and well while they serve the community."

Currently, more than half of Clayton's firefighters have signed up for the registry, and the department hopes to reach 100 percent participation. This effort benefits not only firefighters, but the community as well. Healthier firefighters are better prepared to respond quickly and safely to emergencies, protecting residents and property.

Carter also highlighted the department's broader focus on staff well-being. "Achieving Gold Helmet Status is one part of our efforts to provide tools and resources that support longer, healthier lives for our firefighters," he said.

Gold Helmet Status is just one part of how the Clayton Fire Department is reducing long-term health risks for its personnel. By combining exposure tracking, immediate post-fire decontamination, health-focused resources, and ongoing staff education, the department is setting a standard for firefighter safety while building a safer future for its team and the families they serve.

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