



Cobb Professional Fire Fighters Local 2563
PO BOX 2054
Marietta, GA 30061

Brothers and Sisters,

Update on the Departmental Physicals-

I had the opportunity to talk to Chief Miller about the employee physicals that the Fire Department is working on. According to Chief Miller, the Draft policy for physicals has been written but has not gone to Legal yet. And as you know, when something goes to Legal, it takes multiple drafts that go back and forth until it is a finished product.

Chief Miller said that Dr. Walker from Site-Med (Kennesaw) has been instrumental in helping with designing the physical requirements and procedures. Dr. Walker has an extensive background with implementing policies that correspond with NFPA's requirements and guidelines. The employee clinic will be performing the physicals.

Currently the HazMat Team members are using the clinic for their required yearly physicals. Unfortunately there have been some minor issues but are being vetted out as we speak. In essence, the HazMat Team will actually be test-driving our departmental physicals plan. One thing that will be omitted from our test will be the "heavy metals" test.

According to Chief Miller, no random drug test should be pulled from the physicals. This part still has to receive approval from Human Resources. County policy states that required alcohol and drug screening should occur under 6 circumstances:

- 1. Pre-employment testing*
- 2. Random testing*
- 3. Post-accident testing*
- 4. Reasonable suspicion testing*
- 5. Return to duty testing*
- 6. Follow-up testing*

As you guys are aware, these things do not happen overnight. It may take up to one year to have everything implemented. Also, the logistical end of getting everyone down to the clinic on duty along with every day needs of the department (available manpower, vacation leave, sick leave, training, etc.) all come into play.

I will tell you this; Chief Miller is very open to any additional ideas that may be beneficial to help with the Logistical end. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact me and/or Chief Miller.

I have one more added point to the Health and Safety for all of us. Most know that Capt. Mitchell had some heart issues that were discovered in a doctor's visit. It actually turns out that he went for a \$99 Wellstar Health Screen that the county pushed out over email. During his exam, the doctors on site advised him to see a



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cardiologist immediately. Capt. Mitchel underwent procedures that corrected a fatal heart issue. In fact, Capt. Mitchel's doctors said if this would have not been found and corrected, this condition would have easily turned sideways dropping dead within one to two years. Please take advantage of these special programs the county offers and/or sends out about partnerships with Wellstar. It actually may save your life.

In my opinion, we should all know that this isn't the silver bullet to keeping us healthy. The responsibility of staying health eventually bears on us as individuals. And the older I get the more important it is for me to try and do as much as I can. We all know there are pros and cons to every program. However, if the county is going to offer this to us, I say let's take advantage of it before they take something else away from us.

Eventually, our goal is to a have long and healthy career with the opportunity to reach our end game of a great retirement. If you have any concerns, suggestion, complaints, critiques, please let me know either by email, phone call, and/or text.

*Your Humble Servant,
Dave Dwyer*