

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy – Addendum**

**#A-051b**

**Date: 3-15-2004**

The Union Vale Fire District recognizes the problem of drug and alcohol abuse in society, while also realizing that drug and alcohol dependency and abuse can be treated and controlled. We further recognize that drug use by members of this organization would be a threat to the public welfare and the safety of all members of the department and district.

One of the goals of this policy is to eliminate illegal drug use through education, evaluation, and rehabilitation of the affected personnel. The possession, use or being under the influence of unauthorized drugs shall not be permitted while on duty or conducting any official business in connection with the Union Vale Fire District.

No Illegal drugs or alcohol will be allowed in or on Union Vale Fire District property. The Union Vale Fire District may, by resolution, for special events (i.e. wakes, weddings, dinners, etc) held on District property, decide to allow alcohol on the premises if the following conditions are met:

- 1) A “TIPS” certified bartender must be provided for the event. Such bartender must not be a member of the Union Vale Fire Company.
- 2) All alcohol must be removed immediately from the premises after such event.

### **NEW MEMBER (AFTER 1/22/04)**

It is the policy of the Union Vale Fire District to provide drug/alcohol screening for persons elected to active membership with the Union Vale Fire Department.

All applicants for membership with the Union Vale Fire Department shall be required to submit to a drug/alcohol test consent agreement. Failure to sign the consent and/or submit to testing shall disqualify the candidate for consideration for membership in the Fire Department.

In order to assist in meeting the goals of this policy, the Union Vale Fire District shall take a proactive approach to mitigate the problem of drug and alcohol addiction and abuse in the following ways:

#### **1.) Illegal Drugs**

The use, sale, consumption, possession, or distribution of drugs or other controlled substance while on District property, owned or leased (including vehicles), or while engaged in District business is strictly prohibited and will result in discipline up to and including termination of membership from the Fire Department. Members shall be responsible for their guests brought onto District premises.

#### **2.) Prescribed Drugs**

Use of medically prescribed medications and drugs is not seen as a violation of this policy. However, when taking medications or drugs, which could interfere with safe and effective performances of duties or operations of District equipment, the firefighter should notify a District Officer. Should a performance problem or incident occur, disciplinary action may be taken up to including suspension from firematic duties for failure to make such notification. In the event there is a question regarding a firefighter's ability to safely and effectively perform assigned duties while using such medications or drugs, clearance from a qualified physician may be

required.

### 3.) **Alcohol**

Alcohol is a legal substance, and it is understood that the use of alcoholic beverages may accompany normal social activities. It is, however, the responsibility of each firefighter to avoid safety sensitive activities if they are or could become under the influence of alcohol during their duties as a firefighter. Furthermore, it is understood that blood alcohol levels may fluctuate based upon the effects of the time of ingestion and the quantity ingested, and the demands on the fire service are unpredictable with regard to the time of need.

### 4.) **Education**

The Union Vale Fire District will make available brochures, flyers, and/or booklets on drug and alcohol abuse. This information, and/or information pertaining to the adverse results of drug and alcohol abuse, will be made available to the members through the Union Vale Fire Department, at least on an annual basis.

## **DRIVING OF DISTRICT APPARATUS**

No person shall:

- (a) Consume a drug, controlled substance, or intoxicating liquor, regardless of its alcohol content or be under the influence of an intoxicating liquor or drug, within eight (8) hours before operating or having physical control of said apparatus.
- (b) Consume a drug, controlled substance, or intoxicating liquor regardless of its alcohol content while operating or in physical control of said apparatus.

Therefore, the Union Vale Fire District will require a two-tiered system of alcohol monitoring for its members.

### **Tier One: Voluntary Compliance:**

The Union Vale Fire District will require that any member, responding to a call or wishing to participate in firefighting, drills, EMS, etc., voluntarily comply with this policy. If a firefighter has ingested any alcohol or if there was an excessive degree of consumption such that the potential for substance alcohol levels may exist, the fire fighter will not respond to further calls for a period of eight (8) hours following his or her last drink.

### **Tier Two: For Cause Testing – See A-051**

- 1) **Post-accident Testing** - A drug and alcohol test will be required when a driver is involved in a personal injury or disabling property damage accident while driving a vehicle. The driver will be escorted for the drug and alcohol test to the location of the District's designated physician or health testing organization, by the senior Officer available.
- 2) **Reasonable Suspicion** - A member will be required to have a drug and alcohol test administered upon the observation of reasonable suspicion by a person or member at the fire related function. Reasonable suspicion must include specific, clearly stated observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or body odors of the member. Before requiring testing, reasonable suspicions will be observed and documented by a second party. Reasonable suspicions will be noted in writing and kept on file. The

firefighter will immediately be removed from participation in the fire related function, and will be escorted for drug and alcohol tests by the senior Officer available to the location of the District's designated physician or health testing organization.

- 3) Return-to-duty - Drug testing may be required of someone who had sanctions taken against them for drug abuse, by the district designated physician or health testing organization, prior to returning to duty.

**SANCTIONS:**

Upon the failure of a required drug or alcohol-screening test, an opportunity for a second test, to eliminate the chance for errors, will be offered. The failure of the second test, or the refusal to take either such test, shall result in the suspension of all duties and rights as a member of the Fire Department.

**5.) Rehabilitation:**

It is recommended that the member's family doctor be consulted. Also, Services may be provided by the FAP program at The Work Place, the Union Vale Fire District's medical provider (or their successor).(See A-051)

The purpose of this policy and program is to discourage illegal drug use, to enforce good judgment in the use of alcohol for recreational purposes while still offering services to protect the community, and strongly discouraging unsafe judgment, which could put the fire service or the public at risk.