



Forest
Service

Southwestern Region
Regional Office

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Route To:

Subject: Regional Burn Injury Protocol

To: All Employees

With fire season progressing rapidly here in the Southwest, we find it disheartening that several wildland fire entrapment and burnover incidents have already occurred in Arizona and California. Even more distressing is the fact that several of these instances resulted in severe burn wounds, some requiring hospitalization and/or surgery. Fortunately, all individuals were provided with immediate medical attention.

Most of these incidents occurred in light, flashy fuels with rapidly changing conditions and wind-driven fire behavior. Four of the five incidents involved fire engine personnel, and one incident involved a hotshot crew member. All personnel were fully qualified, with a wealth of wildland fire expertise among them.

Although these incidents did not take place in our Region, they could easily have happened here. With the Southwestern fire season in full swing, we anticipate a continued increase in fire activity, to include rapidly changing conditions and wind-driven fire behavior. It is therefore imperative that we all maintain our situational awareness on incident assignments here in the Southwest and in other regions as well.

It is critical that each one of us is familiar with the current OWCP process that is in place for any employee who becomes ill or injured on an incident. The enclosed briefing paper helps us to understand that process and follow it.

Key OWCP highlights addressed in the briefing paper are as follows:

- A **24/7 OWCP Hotline (505/280-7691)** has been established for after-hours and weekend emergencies. A 24-Hour duty officer will be available to answer questions and advise Forest Service employees seeking the appropriate medical care and ensure that they receive it.
- Human Capital Management (HCM) has updated their OWCP website regarding the established OWCP procedures and requirements: <http://fsweb.hcm.fs.fed.us/owcp.html>



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We remain committed to ensuring the health and safety of each of our employees and providing the best care for those employees who become ill or injured while on the job.

/s/ Gilbert Zepeda (for)
CORBIN L. NEWMAN, JR.
Regional Forester

Enclosures