

CA- Los Angeles

(5)

Executive News Svc.

APnc 11/07 2030 Non-Smoking Firefighters

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Smokers need not apply to the Los Angeles Fire Department, according to a new contract.

"This could, over the years, save us some money," and could result in a healthier work force, Battalion Chief Dean Cathey said. He said the ban on hiring smokers was proposed by the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City, the firefighters' union.

Because firefighters have a higher rate of lung cancer than the general population, Cathey said, state law requires that respiratory illnesses in firefighters be considered work-related and treatment be paid by employers under worker's compensation rules.

Under the pact, only non-smokers would be hired by the department and they would be prohibited from taking up smoking during their employment. The contract does not affect current firefighters.

The contract, covering more than 2,500 firefighters, was approved Friday by the City Council.

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