



MEDIA ADVISORY - September 13, 2021
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It is with the heaviest of hearts that Forest Grove Fire & Rescue announces the line of duty death of Captain Rick Ilg, who passed away at his home on September 12, 2021. Captain Ilg had been fighting a heroic and determined battle against brain cancer since he was first diagnosed with this disease in December 2018, returning to full duty after a number of procedures and treatments before the cancer progressed again. Captain Ilg is survived by his wife and their daughter, he was 49 years old.

Captain Ilg has been employed by the City of Forest Grove since 2006, coming to work as a Firefighter Paramedic, Rick joined us after working as a Paramedic with Metro West Ambulance. Captain Ilg's efforts in emergency medicine enabled him to be one of the regions highest respected and regarded Paramedics. Rick was promoted to a Lieutenant with Forest Grove Fire & Rescue in 2015, and achieved the rank of Captain in 2019. He remained in the Captain's rank until this cancer forced his retirement in the summer of 2021.

In his fifteen years of service, Captain Ilg is also our department's highest decorated firefighter, with numerous commendations and awards for service in our community. Included in this long list of accolades is our department's highest honor, a Medal of Valor, which Rick earned in 2014 during a daring technical rescue in the Oregon Coast Range Mountains. During Captain Ilg's career, he has served as our department's emergency medical services officer, a field trainer for new employees, and led the recent grant funded purchase that replaced all of our self-contained breathing apparatus.

Occupational cancer is a grim and serious issue for the fire service. The smoke, and burned debris of our modern structure fires contain considerable amount of carcinogens and toxins that have been scientifically proven to contribute to causing cancer. That being said, cancer is considered a line of duty death for firefighters. Though other firefighters have succumbed to cancer in our agency's history, Rick's loss is the first line of duty death in Forest Grove since the adoption of presumptive cancer legislation was passed in Oregon over two decades ago.

Future announcements will be made in regards to services and ceremonies

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