



Jerry Richardson
Medic for 27+ years
Medic Lieutenant
Portland Fire and Rescue



Jerry was diagnosed with mesothelioma August 10th, 2018. He started his career as a firefighter in the Air force. Then, after departing his military service, he worked as a medic in Eastern Washington and Idaho. From there, he moved to Cottage Grove Oregon as a Fire Medic where he spent 8 years. Jerry now works as a Medic Lieutenant on one of the Fireboats for Portland Fire and Rescue and is a well respected veteran of this department for the past 19 years.

The news of Jerry's cancer was devastating to his family and the Portland Fire and Rescue department. Mesothelioma was not considered presumptive so time off and bills were originally his responsibility. Several fundraisers were started to assist with medical expenses that the city and his insurance would not cover. Jerry was forced to seek alternative methods of treatment and endured multiple tests for which he was responsible for payment.

Jumping forward, Local 43, our representative Union, fought Jerry's case and his cancer is now considered a line of duty event. This is good for the fact that many of his medical expenses will be covered. Due to the nature of his cancer being so rare, only 1,200 cases per year in recent statistics, treatment and results vary. Jerry is fighting every day and is doing a lot of research to improve his diet and is looking into supplementing his fight with other treatments using natural remedies that augment his chemotherapy. These are additional expenses incurred to his day-to-day routine. Jerry's cancer is aggressive and they are continually looking for aggressive means to eliminate it. Future travel to cancer centers across the country could be an option, This would most likely be at his own expense. It's hard to predict an outcome, but the longer Jerry is able to fight this rare cancer the more we can learn to educate our brothers in similar situations and possibly find a cure. I guess you could say that Jerry has been picked to fight this disease for all of us. I'm 100% sure all firefighters have had asbestos exposure.

Jerry has a long road ahead and relies on his faith and family to get through each day. On a personal note I am proud to be a firefighter and that organizations like Lionhardt are there to help us through hard times. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to the families of firefighters who have sacrificed to make this organization what it is.