

311 RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

To set minimum training requirements for department members who are required to use respiratory protection when engaged in fire department operations.

SCOPE:

This procedure is applicable to all members.

DEFINITIONS:

PASS - Personal alert safety system device.

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

SCBA - Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDE:

General

Firefighters shall wear a SCBA with the regulator connected to the mask under the following conditions:

- while engaged in interior structural firefighting
- while working in Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmospheres
- while working in confined spaces where toxic by-products or an oxygen deficiency may be present during emergency situations involving toxic substances; and
- during all phases of firefighting and overhaul.

All firefighters shall continue to wear an SCBA until the officer in charge determines that respiratory protection is no longer required.

PPE

Firefighters wearing SCBA shall be fully protected with the use of approved structural firefighting clothing that meets the requirements of the NFPA and PEOSH. PPE shall include turnout coat, bunker pants, gloves, boots, helmet, and hood.

Operating Procedure

A minimum of two trained firefighters shall work together and shall maintain visual or voice communication at all times while wearing SCBA in interior structural fire fighting operations and IDLH atmosphere.

Firefighters shall not remove the SCBA face piece at any time in the dangerous atmosphere. SCBA shall be used in accordance with the manufacturers instructions (attached)

A minimum of two firefighters shall be located outside the IDLH atmosphere to perform the duties of the Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC). The RIC shall follow the Burlington County Fire Chiefs' RIC Guidelines. Firefighters may perform emergency rescue operations before the RIC has assembled.

TRAINING

Firefighters wearing SCBA shall be trained in its proper use, cleaning and maintenance. No firefighter shall wear SCBA without training as specified in this document.

MINIMUM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (INITIAL):

Initial training is to be provided during the Firefighter I Course at a NJ Division of Fire Safety approved training facility. Initial training must meet those requirements as outlined in N.J.A.C. 5:18C-4.3(a)4. Protective Breathing Apparatus.

MINIMUM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (CONTINUOUS):

Respiratory Protection training shall be provided to all firefighters that are required to wear SCBA.

Each firefighter shall be required to successfully pass an approved SCBA refresher course and a qualitative fit-test on an annual basis.

The approved SCBA refresher course shall cover the following:

- Instruction in the principles of operation of the SCBA used by the department
- Instruction on the capabilities and limitations of the SCBA
- Instruction on the hazardous environments that may be encountered including environments with
 - Particular contaminants
 - Gas and vapor contaminants
 - Combinations of gas, vapor, and particular contaminants
 - Oxygen deficiency
 - High temperatures
- Instruction and training for the actual use of SCBA's shall include the following subjects:
 - Procedures for donning and doffing
 - Operation of the integrated PASS device.
 - Practice of controlled breathing
 - Emergency procedures
 - Use of the emergency by-pass valve
 - Preventative maintenance, care and cleaning
 - Special problems involving the use of SCBA
 1. Low temperatures - lenses, exhaust valves, connections, material problems
 2. High temperatures
 3. Communications difficulties
 4. Confined spaces
 5. Vision
 6. Facepiece-to-Face sealing
 7. SCBA's do not provide protection from skin absorbed materials and skin irritants, ionizing radiation
 8. use around water
- Instruction on the common causes of failure
 - Abuse and misuse of equipment
 - Psychological and physiological factors
 - Unapproved equipment
 - Buddy breathing

A Qualitative Fit test shall be conducted on an annual basis to determine the correct size facepiece to be worn by each individual firefighter. A firefighter shall not wear SCBA unless the proper size facepiece is available and the equipment is in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications.

Since an effective face-to-facepiece seal is extremely important, nothing can be between the sealing surface of the mask and the face of the wearer including but not limiting to: eyeglasses, protective hood, and beards or other facial hair that may interfere with the mask seal. Protective hoods shall only be worn in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

NOTE: The use of soft contact lenses shall be permitted with the SCBA, provided that the firefighter wearing soft contact lenses has worn contact lenses for at least six months without any problems. (See attached)

INSPECTION AND RECORDKEEPING:

Regular periodic inspections are required to ensure that all SCBA equipment is properly operating and available for use. The career staff will be responsible to complete the required inspections and any reports as may be required by the Chief as it pertains to; use, training, inspection, storage, maintenance, or any other condition that may relate to the use of SCBA.

ENFORCEMENT

It will be the responsibility of the station commander or his/her designee to assure that all requirements of this policy is completed by each member of his/her station and that all necessary documentation that may be required by the Chief is completed as required.

