
	STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE			
	OPERATIONS			
	USE OF SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS			
	Effective: 01/Dec/98	Revised: 28/DEC/2020	S.O.G. #: O-319	

1.0 Purpose



- 1.1 The purpose of this guideline is to establish procedures for the donning and use of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus during emergency alarms.

2.0 Responsibility

- 2.1 It is the responsibility of all Department personnel to understand the procedures documented in this Standard Operating Guideline.

3.0 Implementation

- 3.1 The use of breathing apparatus means that personnel shall have face pieces in place and breathing air from the supply provided.
- 3.2 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be used by all personnel operating in:
 - 3.2.1 A contaminated atmosphere.
 - 3.2.2 An atmosphere which may suddenly become contaminated.
 - 3.2.3 An atmosphere which is oxygen deficient.
 - 3.2.4 An atmosphere which is suspected of being contaminated or oxygen deficient.
- 3.3 This includes all personnel operating in:
 - 3.3.1 An active fire area.
 - 3.3.2 Directly above an active fire area.
 - 3.3.3 A potential explosion or fire area, including gas leaks and fuel spills.
 - 3.3.4 Where products of combustion are visible in the atmosphere, including vehicle fires and dumpster fires.
 - 3.3.5 Where invisible contaminants are suspected to be present, i.e. carbon monoxide incidents.
 - 3.3.6 Where toxic products are present, are suspected of being present, or may be released without warning.
 - 3.3.7 Any confined space which has not been tested to establish respiratory safety.
- 3.4 In addition to the above, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be worn by all personnel operating at fire incidents above ground, below ground, or in any area which is not but which may become contaminated by products of combustion or other hazardous substances. In these circumstances only, the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus may be worn with the face piece removed. The wearing of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus in these situations provides that it will be immediately available for use if conditions change or if personnel are to enter an area where the use of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus is required.
- 3.5 Premature removal of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus must be avoided at all times. This is particularly significant during overhaul when smoldering materials may produce increased quantities of Carbon Monoxide and other toxic products. In these cases, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus must be used or the atmosphere must be changed.
- 3.6 In routine fire situations, the decision to remove Self Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be made by the Company Officers, with the approval of the Incident Commander, based on an evaluation of the conditions. Prior to removal, fire areas shall be thoroughly ventilated and, where necessary, continuous ventilation provided.
- 3.7 If there is a doubt about respiratory safety, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus use shall be maintained until the atmosphere is established to be safe by testing.

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4.0 Evaluation



- 4.1 An evaluation of all members of the Fire Department in the use of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be conducted annually. Each member shall be able to demonstrate a high level of proficiency and compatibility with the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus under conditions which simulate those expected as a job requirement.

5.0 Team Operations

- 5.1 When a Company arrives on the scene and determines that an IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health) atmosphere exists at a structure fire, the Company Officer shall advise all responding Companies of a “working structure fire” as part of the on-air size-up report.
- 5.2 At least four members shall be assembled before initiating interior fire fighting operations at structural fires (except as noted in 6.0 - Exceptions).
- 5.3 At any time during an incident, the Incident Commander may request additional units/resources to maintain a safe emergency scene operation.
- 5.4 The four members assembled for initial fire fighting operations can include any combination of members arriving separately at the incident. This guideline is intended to compliment the Incident Commander's use of discretionary judgment. Members operating in these areas must use Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and shall operate in teams of two or more (2-in / 2-out rule mandated by OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134[g] [4]) who are in communication with each other through direct voice or visual contact. In addition, at least two other fully-equipped and trained fire fighters must remain outside the structure, monitoring those inside and being prepared to rescue them.
- 5.5 Whenever there is more than one team operating or assigned in the IDLH atmosphere, the incident shall no longer be considered in the “initial stage,” (the period of the incident when tasks are being undertaken by the first arriving Company with only one team assigned or operating in the IDLH atmosphere) and at least one RIC shall be required.
- 5.6 During the initial stages of an incident, two (2) of the required four person minimum on the scene must remain outside the IDLH atmosphere as standby persons.
- 5.7 One (1) of the standby persons must provide constant awareness and maintain communications with members of the interior team. This member must be equipped with a portable radio. The other standby person is permitted to perform other duties outside of the atmosphere, such as operate apparatus, perform as the Incident Commander, or perform as a medical team. The activities performed by this standby person must not interfere with his/her ability to perform the duties of the standby person and assist in the event of an emergency.
- 5.8 The standby persons must have full protective equipment including S.C.B.A. necessary to enter an IDLH atmosphere readily accessible in the event that the team members operating in the IDLH area need rescue.
- 5.9 If a standby person(s) is required to enter the structure to rescue a team member(s), the standby person(s) must notify the Incident Commander.

6.0 Exceptions

- 6.1 If, upon arrival at the scene, members find a situation where immediate action may prevent the loss of life or serious injury, such action shall be permitted with less than four persons on the scene when conducted in accordance with normal size-up indicators and fire ground evaluation factors.
 - 6.1.1 Residential Occupancies - In the absence of a report from a reasonable person on the scene that everyone is out of the residence, it is to be assumed that a life hazard exists until a primary search has been completed and an “All Clear ” has been received from the Company performing the search.

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- 6.1.2 Business or Commercial (Non-Residential) Occupancies - The Company Officer will have to evaluate the situation, consider the type of occupancy, time of day, day of the week, reports from persons on the scene, etc. and evaluate this information and place it in an action plan.
- 6.1.3 Vacant or Abandoned Structures - Entry into the IDLH atmosphere with less than the minimum four (4) persons on the scene is prohibited unless there are clear signs or a report from a responsible person on the scene that people are in the structure.

7.0 Reference

7.1 Highland Park Fire Department

Approved:  Fire Chief