

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

Standard Operating Procedures

40.04.02 SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS



Adopted:	04/12/17
Reviewed:	12/15/23
Revised:	12/15/23
Approved:	Lonnie J. Rash

Purpose: To identify the use and maintenance of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

References: NFPA 1981, “Standard on Open Circuit Self Contained Breathing Apparatus for Fire Fighters 2019.” ANSI Z88, “Practices for Respiratory Protection 1992.” WAC 296-305-04001(Respiratory Equipment Protection), WAC 296-305-02501 (Emergency Medical Protection), WAC 296-62 Part I-1, Asbestos, Tremolite, Anthophyllite, and Actinolite, WAC 296-842 (Respirators), NIOSH standard 42 CFR part 84 Respiratory Protective Devices, NIOSH Standard 87-116, NFPA 1852 Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus 2019

Procedure:

1. The SCBA Program Administrator in Spokane County Fire District 8 is the Assistant Chief per WAC 296-305-04001 (4) & 296-842-1050 (5)
2. SCBA shall be provided for and shall be used by all personnel working in areas where:
 - a) The atmosphere is hazardous.
 - b) The atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous.
 - c) The atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous.
3. In addition to the above,
 - a) All personnel working below ground level or inside any confined space shall be provided with SCBA unless the safety of the atmosphere can be established by testing and continuous monitoring.
4. The required use of SCBA means that the user must have the facepiece in place, breathing from the SCBA only.
 - a) Wearing a SCBA without the facepiece in place does not satisfy this requirement and should be permitted only under conditions in which the immediate safety of the atmosphere is assured.
 - b) All members working in proximity to areas where SCBA use is required should have a SCBA on their backs or immediately available for donning.
5. Areas where the atmosphere can rapidly become hazardous could include:
 - a) Rooftop areas during ventilation operations.
 - b) Areas where an explosion or container rupture could be anticipated.

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6. A hazardous atmosphere would be suspected in:
 - a) Vehicle fires.
 - b) Overhaul areas.
 - c) Above the fire floor in a building fire.
 - i. Members working in these areas are required to use the SCBA unless the safety of the atmosphere is established by testing and maintained by effective ventilation.
 - ii. With effective ventilation in operations, facepieces could be removed, under direct supervision, but SCBA should continue to be worn or immediately available.
7. SCBA of the open-circuit design shall be positive pressure and shall meet the requirements of NFPA 1981, "Standard on Open Circuit Self Contained Breathing Apparatus for Fire Fighters."
8. Sources of a compressed gaseous breathing air, such as compressors, cascade systems, storage receivers, etc., used for filling SCBA cylinders shall be tested at least every three months meeting the requirements of WAC296-305-04001(6)
9. SCBA cylinders shall be hydrostatically tested within the periods specified by the manufacturers and the applicable governmental agencies.
10. All SCBAs shall be inspected, used, and maintained as specified in WAC 296-842-17015.
 - a) Conduct respirator inspections before each use; and during cleaning; or monthly if not used
 - b) Employees shall ensure respirator inspections cover **all** of the following:
 - i. Respirator function;
 - ii. Tightness of connections;
 - iii. The condition of the facepiece, head straps, valves, connecting tubes, and cartridge, canisters or filters;
 - iv. Pliability and deterioration of elastomeric parts;
 - v. Maintenance of air or oxygen cylinders;
 - vi. Making sure SCBA air cylinders are at ninety percent of the manufacturer's recommended pressure level;
 - vii. Proper functioning of SCBA regulators when air-flow is activated; and
 - viii. Proper functioning of SCBA low-pressure warning devices when activated.

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- c) Employees shall certify inspections for emergency respirators by documenting the following:
- i. Inspection date;
 - ii. Serial number of each respirator or other identifying information;
 - iii. Inspector's name or signature;
 - iv. Inspection findings; and
 - v. Required action, if problems are found.

Note: When documenting inspections you may either:

1. Provide the information on a tag or label and attach it to the respirator compartment; or
2. Include the information in an inspection report stored in paper or electronic files accessible to employees.

- d) Repair or replace any respirator that is not functioning properly **before** the employee returns to a situation where respirators are required. If respirators fail inspection or are not functioning properly during use due to problems such as leakage, vapor or gas breakthrough, or increased breathing resistance, ALL of the following apply:
- i. Do NOT permit such respirators to be used until properly repaired or adjusted;
 - ii. Use only NIOSH-certified parts;
 - iii. Make sure repairs and adjustments are made by appropriately trained individuals;
 - iv. Use the manufacturer or a technician trained by the manufacturer to repair or adjust reducing and admission valves, regulators, and warning devices on SCBAs or air-line respirators.
 - v. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications for the type and extent of repairs.

11. Members using SCBA shall operate in teams of two or more who are in communication with each other by:

- a) Visual.
- b) Audible.
- c) Physical
- d) Safety guide rope
- e) Electronic or other means to coordinate their activities.
- f) Are in close proximity to each other to provide assistance in case of and emergency.

12. When members are involved in operations that require the use of SCBA or other respiratory protective equipment:

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- a) At least two members shall be assigned to remain outside the area where respiratory protection is required.
- b) Members shall be responsible for:
 - i. Maintaining a constant awareness of the number and identity of personnel using SCBAs.
 - ii. Their location and function.
 - iii. Time of entry (Passport System).
 - iv. Beards or facial hair that interfere with the facepiece seal shall be prohibited for members required to use SCBA.
 - v. If eyeglasses are worn, the members shall use frames that do not pass through the seal area of the facepiece.
 - vi. Cleaning will be according to current manufactures recommendations as posted at each fire station.

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Table 2

Advisory Information for Employees Who Voluntarily Use Respirators

- Respirators protect against airborne hazards when properly selected and used. Respirator usage that is required by DOSH or your employer is not voluntary use. With required use, your employer will need to provide further training and meet additional requirements in this chapter. DOSH recommends voluntary use of respirators when exposure to substances is below DOSH permissible exposure limits (PELs) because respirators can provide you an additional level of comfort and protection.
- If you choose to voluntarily use a respirator (whether it is provided by you or your employer) be aware that **respirators can create hazards for you**, the user. You can avoid these hazards if you know how to use your respirator properly AND how to keep it clean. Take these steps:
 - Read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer about use, maintenance (cleaning and care), and warnings regarding the respirator's limitations.
 - Choose respirators that have been certified for use to protect against the substance of concern. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) certifies respirators. If a respirator is not certified by NIOSH, you have no guarantee that it meets minimum design and performance standards for workplace use.
 - A NIOSH approval label will appear on or in the respirator packaging. It will tell you what protection the respirator provides.
 - Keep track of your respirator so you do not mistakenly use someone else's.
 - **DO NOT** wear your respirator into:
 - Required use situations when you are only allowed voluntary use.
 - Atmospheres containing hazards that your respirator is not designed to protect against.

For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against solvent vapor, smoke or oxygen deficiency.