

Using Electronic Resources in a Review of RPE Use in an Emergency Response

Overview

Electronic resources are increasingly useful tools for emergency responders. In this exercise you will use an electronic resource to access requirements for use of SCBA in emergency response and then review your experience with respiratory protection that may be required when the incident command system is activated. The respiratory protection program at your company will be reviewed to determine if there are opportunities for improvement.

Objectives

- Demonstrate the use of the internet to access a guideline on SCBA usage in an emergency.

- Describe situations where you have used respiratory protection for emergency response.
- Demonstrate use of a checklist on the elements of a respiratory program to identify possible improvements.

Access Guideline

Using your laptop, tablet or smartphone, access factsheets at the International Association of Fire Firefighters (IAFF) Health, Safety and Medicine website:

www.iaff.org/HS/facts/index.asp; see especially OSHA SCBA Medical Requirements and 3/30 Rule Position for WMD.

Take 10-15 minutes to read through this carefully, particularly the program requirements set by OSHA for use of SCBAs.

Discuss

If the class is large, you may work in smaller groups. Select someone to be the “recorder” for your group responses.

Take about 20 minutes to discuss the following:

1. Describe a situation you have experienced in which respiratory protective equipment (RPE) has been used for emergency response.
2. What type of RPE was used in that response and why? If no RPE was used by some of the response team, what was the reason?
3. If SCBA was used, what conditions during the emergency made it necessary to use?

For each question, summarize the responses of the group.

4. As **individuals**,

Does your employer have a written respiratory protection program (circle)

Yes

No

Don't Know

If yes, take about 10 minutes to complete the following checklist developed from the information shown on the IAFF website you just accessed:

Does your employer program include the following?

Element in a Written Respiratory Protection Program	Yes	No	Don't Know
Procedures for selecting respirators.			
Medical evaluation procedures of employees who will wear respirators.			
Fit testing procedures for tight-fitting respirators (e.g., SCBA).			
Procedures for the proper use of respirators.			
Procedures and schedules for the cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respirators.			
Procedures to ensure adequate air quality, quantity, and flow of breathing air for atmosphere supplying respirators (e.g., SCBA).			
Training employees in respiratory hazards to which they will potentially be exposed.			
Training of employees in proper use of respirators, including donning, doffing, limitations in use, and their maintenance.			
Procedures for regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the respiratory protection program.			
Does your employer identify a physician or other licensed health professional to complete the testing?			

Report a summary of the responses from your group to the class.

5. Continuing in your small group, consider the responses to this review and answer the following:
 - Are there any changes you would like to see your company make in respiratory protection planning?
 - What actions would you suggest to make these changes?

Summarize the changes that your group has identified, if any.