

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.

Facilitator Information

Time Requirement: 1 hour

Number of Instructors: 1

Small group activity

Resources

- Participant manual
- Laptops, tablet computers or smartphones with internet
- Easels and easel paper or marker board to record answers
- Company respiratory protection program (contract)
- Model respiratory protection program (open enrollment)

Preparation

Read over the exercise, and review any written programs that are available for the employers of participants. For open enrollment programs, use a model program such as shown at:

https://www.osha.gov/dcsp/compliance_assistance/sampleprograms.html

https://www.state.nj.us/health/workplacehealthandsafety/documents/peosh/respr_omp.pdf

Many other model programs are shown on the internet; the two shown here do not carry copyright protection.

- Prepare/think about possible participant input.
- Ensure internet access is available.
- The class may be split into small groups for this exercise.

Presentation of the Exercise

Have participants use classroom laptops, notebooks or smartphones to 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.

Give participants enough time (10-15 minutes) to read and review the factsheets, especially the portion on SCBA usage in emergency setting.

Break class into groups of 3-4. Ask 1 participant in each group to be the recorder for the discussion: (20 minutes)

Add to the following sample responses to the questions, as part of preparation:

1. Describe a situation you have experienced in which respiratory protective equipment (RPE) has been used for emergency response.

- Spill of Methyl Ethyl Bad Stuff (MEBS) at the loading dock.
 - Used full face APRs based on low toxicity
 - Decon team did not use RPE, but was protected from skin contact
- Fire of Teflon pellets.
 - Used SCBA due to risk of polymer fume fever
 - Everyone in RPE
- Rescue as a result of ‘down in a confined space’ call.
 - Used SCBA as someone was down potentially due to exposure
 - Attendant did not require RPE
 - Back up team was ready with SCBA, but not needed

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?

See above (1)

3. If SCBA was used, what conditions during the emergency made it necessary to use?

See above (1)

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Be ready to facilitate a discussion after the report backs. You might ask:

- Does everyone agree with the RPE use?
- Who makes the decision about what RPE is appropriate?
- What is the role of planning in order to respond in a timely manner?

Develop other questions, as appropriate for the group.

Ask individuals to think about the written program developed by their employer, and complete the table. Reference source of the checklist in the table back to the website accessed earlier.

Facilitate a discussion using the company program, or a model program, after the report back. What next steps are needed? Examples might include

- Training
- Plan review/update
- Plan development

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