Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)

CAUTION:

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) REQUIRED TO BE WORN DURING THIS SOG:

Breathing Apparatus	

THIS SOP APPLIES TO THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Public Works
- ☑ Fire
- ☐ Daycare
- ☐ Administration
- ☐ Facilities
- ☐ Recreation

PURPOSE

It is the policy of Red Lake Fire Rescue that all personnel expected to respond and function in areas of atmospheric contamination shall be equipped with a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and trained in its proper use, care, inspection and maintenance. The purpose of this policy is to ensure members are familiar with the proper use and function of all SCBAs on all apparatus.

POLICY

The intent of the SCBA policy is to avoid any respiratory contact with products of combustion, superheated gases, toxic products, or other hazardous contaminants.

All personnel shall use SCBAs when operating:

- in a contaminated atmosphere
- in an atmosphere which may suddenly become contaminated
- in an atmosphere which is oxygen deficient
- in an atmosphere which is suspected of being contaminated or oxygen deficient

This includes all personnel operating:

- in an active fire area
- directly above an active fire area
- in a potential explosion or fire area, including gas leaks and fuel spills
- where products of combustion are visible in the atmosphere
- where invisible contaminants are suspected to be present, or may be released without warning
- in any confined space, which has not been tested to establish respiratory safety.

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In addition to the above, SCBAs shall be worn by all personnel operating at fire incidents above ground, below ground or in any other area which is not, but may become, contaminated by products of combustion or other hazardous substances. In these circumstances only, the SCBA may be worn with the facepiece removed. The wearing of SCBAs 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 SCBAs is required.

Premature removal of SCBAs 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 SCBAs must be used unless the atmosphere has been sufficiently tested and proven to be safe.

In routine fire situations, the decision to remove SCBAs shall be made by the Incident Commander based on an evaluation of conditions. Prior to removal, fire areas shall be thoroughly ventilated and, where necessary, continuous ventilation shall be provided.

If in doubt about whether an SCBA is appropriate – wear it.

When using SCBA, personnel will have facepieces in place, breathing air from the supply provided. At least two firefighters, both using SCBA will work together and will maintain visual, audible, or physical communications at all times.

Approval Process

Only firefighters who have been approved to wear SCBAs will wear them at a scene. Firefighters will be approved by their local training officer when they are deemed competent. Firefighters must have also passed the departments most recent fit test. Firefighters who don't attend the fit test or who fail the fit test will have their masks removed.

Firefighter must not have any facial hair that protrudes beyond the seal of the mask in order to be approved. Fire fighters who are approved will be assigned their own mask - they are responsible for its care and maintenance.

Fire fighters who no longer meet the standard will have their masks taken away. Ranking officers have the responsibility and authority to remove masks from circulation for any reason at any time.

Maintenance of SCBA

Each SCBA will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. The fire department will use the three bucket method, one soap bucket and two rinsing buckets. The SCBA will then be air dried. After the air dry it is essential to check the seals to make sure the entire mask is dry. Don't drain any water through the valves.

Each firefighter is responsible for cleaning their own mask immediately following every fire call.