

Kent Fire Department Policy & Guidelines

OPERATIONS # 339	<i>Effective Date:</i> 09/20/07	<i>Last Revision:</i>	CFAI Ref:
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Approval: _____, Fire Chief

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

Policy

References:

- 1) WAC 296-305 Safety Standards for Firefighters
- 2) WAC 296-841 Respiratory Hazards
- 3) WAC 296-842 Respirators
- 4) KFD Respiratory Protection Program
- 5) KFD Lesson Plans: MSA Fire Hawk, MSA SAR
- 6) KFD Regional Training Objectives
- 7) L & I Determination of Compliance letter – March 2005
- 8) Fire Investigation Respiratory Policy and Guidelines

Affected Members:

All Employees

Definitions

IDLH – Immediately dangerous to life and health
SCBA – Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
SAR – Supplied Air Respirator
N95 – particulate filter providing 95% efficiency
APR – Air Purifying Respirator

Policy Statement:

There are many potential respiratory hazards associated with delivery of emergency medical services, rescue, fire fighting activities and hazardous materials response. These hazards include smoke and combustion byproducts, oxygen deficiency, airborne pathogens and toxic or poisonous atmospheres.

The use of the proper respiratory protection is mandatory for the employee's health and safety against these airborne contaminants.

All members assigned to work in hazardous atmospheres shall be provided with NIOSH approved SCBA's, SAR's, N95, or other protection approved for the specific application.

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Action by:

Action:

Respiratory Program Administrator

1. Qualified through training or experience to oversee the respiratory protection program and conduct the required periodic and annual evaluations of program effectiveness.
2. Will have the authority to act on any and all matters relating to the operation and administration of the respiratory protection program.

All Employees

1. All Kent Fire Department Personnel shall wear the proper respiratory protection when operating in any of the following atmospheres and/or working conditions. A self-inspection will be preformed prior to entry.
 - a. Any IDLH atmosphere.
 - b. Any potential IDLH atmosphere.
 - c. Unknown atmospheres.
 - d. When transporting an individual with suspected or confirmed infectious tuberculosis or meningococcal bacterium or other infectious air borne illness, even if individual is masked.
 - e. In any permit-required confined space that has not been tested and monitored to establish respiratory safety.
2. SCBA shall be used by all personnel who enter into hazardous atmospheres during structural firefighting activities or other IDLH or potential IDLH atmospheres, including:
 - a. In an active fire area.
 - b. Directly above a fire area.
 - c. Directly under the active area.
 - d. In potential explosive or fire area, including gas leaks or fuel spills.
 - e. Where products of combustion are visible in an atmosphere, including vehicle fires and dumpster fires.
 - f. Where invisible contaminants are present or suspected. This includes the overhaul stage of a fire.
 - g. Where toxic products are present, suspected of being present, or may be released without prior warning.
 - h. In an active chemical spill area where the chemical presents an inhalation hazard.

All Employees

3. Every member who is being considered for inclusion in the

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respiratory protection program must participate in the department's medical surveillance program. The employer shall provide a medical evaluation to determine the member's ability to use a respirator before the member is fit tested or required to use the respirator.

4. Only fire fighters with a properly fitting facepiece shall be permitted by the fire department to function in a hazardous atmosphere with SCBA. Members shall be properly fitted and tested for a face seal prior to use of the respirator in a hazardous atmosphere or contaminated area. Members shall be fit tested annually and whenever there are significant physical changes in the user. Examples: Obvious change in body weight, scarring of face seal area, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or any other condition that may affect the fit of the facepiece seal. Affected members shall notify a Respiratory Protection Technician as soon as practical to schedule a fit test.
5. Members shall be trained in the proper function, use, cleaning and maintenance of any respiratory protection provided for their use including the step-by-step procedures for putting on and removing respirators and checking it for proper function. Training will be conducted prior to use, annually and as necessary to maintain proficiency.
6. Members shall be decontaminated prior to removal of respirators after participating in fire fighting activities.
7. Anytime members are working inside a permit required confined space, they shall wear SCBA or a supplied air line respirator (SAR) with (10 min minimum capacity) escape bottle, unless the safety of the atmosphere can be established by testing and continuous monitoring and ventilation.
8. Facial hair shall not be permitted to come between the sealing periphery of the facepiece and the face or interfere with the valve function of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, or any respirator used by the department. Corrective lenses will be fitted inside the mask to allow for complete seal.
9. Any SCBA/SAR found unstable shall be removed from service, tagged and recorded as such, and tested before being returned to service. Repair of the respirator must be done with parts designed for the respirator in accordance with the manufacturer's instruction, and performed only by a qualified repair technician.

All Employees

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10. No member that has not received respiratory protection training, medical approval, and applicable fit testing in accordance with this policy, shall be assigned to any duty where respiratory protection is required.
11. All SCBA shall have an integrated PASS alarm except the KFD Hazardous Materials team. (see L & I Determination of Compliance letter March - 2005).
12. Downgrading the level of respiratory protection, below that of positive pressure SCBA, may be done *only* when the incident commander determines through the use of air monitoring and/or in the case of air borne pathogens, that the decreased level of respiratory protection will not result in hazardous exposures to personnel. (Specific exclusions for Fire Investigation Personnel.)