

SUBJECT: SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS	SECTION: 306.10
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PURPOSE

To define all safety procedures for the usage of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

POLICY

It is the policy of the Reading Fire Department that all personnel expected or likely to respond to and function in areas of atmospheric contamination, suspected areas of oxygen depletion and/or any area with an unknown atmosphere shall be equipped with and trained in the proper use and maintenance of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall be accountable for the SCBA's located on the firefighting apparatus and shall check the SCBA's for condition and operation at the beginning of each shift and after each use, or at any other time it may be necessary to render the equipment in a ready state of condition. At the minimum, each member should perform an operational check of the SCBA, as defined by the manufacturer of said equipment, prior to the use of the equipment.
- B. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall be issued a personal SCBA facepiece and shall be responsible for the cleanliness, sanitation and function of said facepiece.
- C. Each member of the Reading Fire Department should be quantitatively fit-tested on an annual basis and should receive annual SCBA training as deemed necessary by the training division.
- D. If a SCBA or personal, issued facepiece is found to be functioning improperly or in questionable need of repair, it shall be taken out of service, tagged with a brief description of the malfunction experienced or repair needed, reported to the Logistics Officer responsible for the maintenance of the SCBA or the Shift Officer and replaced as soon as possible, with first-line pumping apparatus given priority as to the replacing of SCBA units.
- E. All personnel shall utilize the provided SCBA when encountering any of the following emergencies:
 1. Above ground level

2. Below ground level
 3. Contaminated atmosphere
 4. Situations where it is likely that the atmosphere may become contaminated
 5. Suspected areas of oxygen depletion
 6. Any unknown atmosphere
 7. At any time as directed by the Fire Ground Commander, the Operations Officer or the Safety Officer
- F. Each member of the Reading Fire Department shall utilize the SCBA in a manner consistent with the operational and maintenance instructions published by the manufacturer.
- G. Each member of the Reading Fire Department should resist the tendency to prematurely remove and discontinue usage of the SCBA during routine fire operations. Each member shall be aware of the respiratory hazards which exist in ordinary, as well as, the extra-ordinary fire situation. It is generally true that carbon monoxide levels increase during overhaul due to the incomplete combustion of smoldering materials. No member should be permitted to perform overhaul procedures without a SCBA unless the determination has been made, by calibrated instrumentation, of an atmosphere containing less than 50 ppm of carbon monoxide.
- H. No member of the Reading Fire Department shall be permitted to remove or discontinue the use of SCBA until the atmosphere has been determined to be safe to operate within. Either use the SCBA or change the atmosphere.
- I. The determination as to the removal of breathing apparatus will be made by the company or sector officers in routine situations. In complex situations, particularly when toxic materials are involved, the Safety Officer, Operations Officer and/or the Fire Ground Commander should be consulted on the decision.