

Standard Operating Procedures Manual
City of Poquoson Fire and Rescue



**City of Poquoson
Fire and Rescue**

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SAFETY AND HEALTH

SOP#: SH 2.00

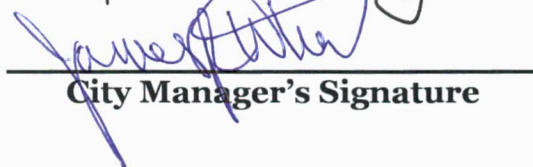
Title: Respiratory Protection
Program

Effective Date: 11/30/2008

Revised Date: 02/25/2021



Fire Chief's Signature



City Manager's Signature

**RESPIRATORY PROTECTION
PROGRAM**

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the establishment of a Respiratory Protection Program for the Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department (PFD).

This SOP is not all-inclusive and cannot encompass all situations that may be encountered.

II. POLICY

To comply with OSHA 29 CFR, Part 1910.134 requirements that mandate that "the employer develop and implement a written respiratory protection program with required work site specific procedures and the elements for required respirator use."

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Respiratory Program Administrator will manage the Respiratory Protection Program and ensure that this policy is implemented as outlined.

The Company Officer(s) will ensure that all procedures as outlined in this policy are carried out by their personnel.

IV. PROCEDURES

- All respirators selected and used by fire and rescue personnel shall be NIOSH certified. This includes respirators such as SCBA used during fire and HAZMAT operations, PAPRS, and HEPA/N95 mask used by emergency medical personnel.
- Respirators shall be selected after evaluating the specific exposure hazard and used based on the requirements stated in the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard and manufacturers instructions, recommendations and listed limitations.
- For EMS response to a potential or known infectious situation, a properly sized and fitted N95 is the preferred mask. For variance from this policy, the current CDC guidance will be followed.
- If the hazard cannot be identified and evaluated, then the fire department will consider the atmosphere to be IDLH (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health). All areas with less than 19.5% oxygen shall be considered IDLH.
- During operations in an IDLH or possible IDLH atmosphere (such as fire fighting and related activities, HAZMAT and certain confined space rescues), fire and rescue personnel shall use Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- PAPRS (powered air purifying respirator system) may be used when they are deemed necessary and at the on-duty officer's discretion. They may be needed during overhaul operations, fire investigations, or EMS related events involving close contact for extended periods of time.

MEDICAL EVALUATIONS

- All fire personnel required to wear SCBA (or other respirators) shall be medically qualified before receiving a respirator fit test.

- Additional fit test may be required if it is reported or noticed that firefighter's physical conditions have changed in a way that may affect the respirator fit. Such physical conditions may include facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery or an obvious change in body weight.

PROPER RESPIRATOR USE

- All respirators shall be used in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. Limitations for all respirators shall be noted before selection and use.
- Before hooking up to air, each SCBA wearer will perform a negative pressure check by covering the face piece inlet or breathing tube and inhaling lightly.
 - If a leak is detected, the firefighter will readjust the face piece and repeat the test. If a seal cannot be achieved, the firefighter will notify his or her company officer.
 - Should the face piece require maintenance, it will be returned to the SCBA maintenance shop. If after inspection, no problem is found, the firefighter shall receive another fit test.
- Nothing shall be permitted to come between the face piece and face of the respirator wearer; this includes facial hair, hoods, corrective lenses, etc.
- During the actual use of the respirator (SCBA, etc.), the firefighter must be aware of any face piece leakage. If the firefighter can smell or taste contaminants or feels air leaking around the face piece, he or she must leave the area immediately if the leak cannot be corrected.
- All areas where contaminants are either unknown or in unknown quantities shall be treated as IDLH atmospheres.

Medical evaluations will not be required when respirator use is no longer part of the job.

- Medical evaluations shall be performed during the annual physicals.
- Supplemental information such as respirator type, weight, duration and use conditions shall be considered during the medical evaluation.
- Follow-up medical examinations shall be required if:
 - Fire personnel report symptoms related to his or her ability to use a respirator.
 - A supervisor or the respirator program manager feels the firefighter shall be reevaluated.
- Observations made during the fit test or program evaluation indicate a need for reevaluation.
- A change occurs in workplace conditions such as increased physical requirements or new protective clothing and SCBA.

FIT TESTING

- All persons required to wear an SCBA or other respirator will be fit tested at least annually using the qualitative fit test method covered in the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard 1910.134.
- Fire personnel shall be fit tested in their own issued face pieces.
- All department personnel required to wear disposable respirators shall be fit tested for the N95 Mask by a certified tester.
- Fit test shall be administered and respirators shall not be worn if conditions exist which may interfere with the face piece seal or operation of the exhalation valve. Facial hair and other conditions that may affect the face piece seal shall not be allowed.

- When working in an IDLH atmosphere, sufficient back up personnel must be available. Visual, voice or signal line communications must be maintained.
- For interior structure fire fighting operations, OSHA “two in, two out” rule shall apply. OSHA Standard 1910.134 Paragraph (g) (4) (i), states, “at least two employees enter the IDLH atmosphere and remain in visual or voice contact at all times; (ii) at least two employees are located outside the IDLH atmosphere; and (iii) all employees engaged in interior structural fire fighting use SCBA’s.”

SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARUTUS USE

- Prior to use of an SCBA, each firefighter assigned to a face piece will complete the manufacturer’s course through Target Solutions annually.
- Each SCBA assigned to a piece of equipment will be checked off accordingly to its specific checklist.
- If deficiencies are found with an SCBA, the SCBA will immediately be removed from service and replaced with a properly functioning SCBA. Any SCBA that is placed out of service will be tagged with all deficiencies. The SCBA technician and station officer on duty will be notified for proper reassignment, maintenance and repair.

BREATHING AIR TEST

- Samples of SCBA breathing air will be taken from the fire department air supply system quarterly and evaluated.
- Breathing air must be Grade “D” or better.
- SCBA will be flow tested annually and whenever a unit is sent in for repairs.

TRAINING

Firefighters shall be trained on and must show knowledge of the following:

- Proper Inspection
- Fit Testing prior to donning
- Proper donning and doffing
- Limitations
- Use of SCBA in emergency such as regulator failure
- Storage
- Cylinder refilling
- Medical symptoms associated with respirator failure
- General understanding of respirator program

RESPIRATOR PROGRAM EVALUATION

- The Health/Safety officer or designee shall conduct annual evaluations of the program and its overall effectiveness by consulting with the Firefighters and Officers.

SCBA TECHNICIAN PROGRAM

- Technician special education and requirements
 - Must have successfully completed the “new hire” probation with the City.
 - VDFP Instructor 1
 - Written recommendation from shift supervisor
 - Completion of SCBA manufacturers technician course
- Technicians will be responsible for maintenance and repairs of the SCBA and associated equipment.
- Technicians will perform the annual flow testing or when deemed necessary by the manufacturer.
- Technicians will also be responsible for performing N95 testing. Certification will be coordinated through the EMS Officer.
- Technicians will coordinate with shift supervisor to perform fit testing.