Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus With PASS

PURPOSE

To establish procedures that insure the highest level of fire ground safety when operating in an atmosphere that is immediately dangerous to life and health as found in interior structural firefighting, and defined in NFPA 1500 and OSHA 29 CFT 1910.134 Section 6-5. The PASS devise is intended to help prevent the occurrence of a fire fighter being in distress, missing, lost, injured, trapped, or unconscious and not being able to summon assistance.

BACKGROUND

This organization has long practiced utilization of self-contained breathing apparatus in atmospheres that may be hazardous or may become hazardous to the health of personnel. Additionally, personnel have been expected to fully utilize all components of the personal protective equipment issued to them.

This policy clearly states that all personal protective equipment is to be utilized at any time there is question of hazard. Maintenance of equipment components and other use considerations may be addressed elsewhere in the District’s Policies and Guidelines.

POLICY

All Travis County ESD #1 personnel expected to respond and function in areas of atmospheric contamination shall be equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus (S.C.B.A.) and trained in its proper use and maintenance.
PROCEDURE

All personnel shall be trained in the proper use and maintenance of SCBA, PASS Devices and other articles of Personal Protective Equipment.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be used by all personnel operating:

1. In a contaminated atmosphere
2. In an atmosphere which may suddenly become contaminated
3. In an atmosphere which is suspected of being contaminated or oxygen deficient
4. In an atmosphere which is oxygen deficient

Premature removal of S.C.B.A. 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.

The decision to remove S.C.B.A. shall be made by company officers, with the approval of command, based on an evaluation of atmospheric conditions. Prior to removal, fire areas shall be thoroughly ventilated and, where necessary, continuous ventilation shall be provided.

If there is any doubt about respiratory safety, S.C.B.A.’s will be worn until the atmosphere is established to be safe by testing. The Safety Officer shall be responsible for this determination.

S.C.B.A.’s shall be worn by all personnel operating in areas which are not, but which may become contaminated by products of combustion or other hazardous substances. In these circumstances only, the S.C.B.A. may be worn with the facepiece removed. The wearing of S.C.B.A. 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 S.C.B.A. is required.

Members shall achieve a NON-LEAKING facepiece-to-skin seal with the mask. Facial hair shall not be allowed at points where the S.C.B.A. facepiece is designed to seal with the face (See grooming policy # 705 in the Employee Handbook). INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS SHALL BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THIS REQUIREMENT.

Each crewmember will be responsible for the proper use and function of their S.C.B.A. The crewmember is responsible for the cleaning and proper storage of the unit after use.

Each crewmember will check their pack daily and document the findings in the station S.C.B.A. Logbook.

If an S.C.B.A. is found to be functioning improperly, it shall be taken out of service, red tagged, reported, and replaced immediately. Replacement S.C.B.A.s shall be obtained from the available spare packs.
Personal Alert Safety System (PASS)

The Personal Alert Safety System provides each fire fighter with a device, integrated into the SCBA, which emits an audible alarm signal in order to summon assistance in the event that the fire fighter becomes incapacitated or needs assistance. With the proper training, this will give the fire fighter the knowledge and skills necessary to inspect, use, search for, locate, and maintain in working order the Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) device.

POLICY

This policy defines the operational guidelines for the use of the PASS device when conducting fire suppression, rescue, training, and any other situation that threatens the Firefighters wellbeing.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are to be utilized by all TCESD #1 member’s when conducting daily inspections, fire suppression, rescue, training, and any other situation that threatens the Firefighter’s wellbeing.

1. Each Travis County Emergency Services District #1 SCBA which is placed in service on any piece of apparatus shall be equipped with a PASS device.
2. Fire fighters will not be permitted to operate in any hazardous environment without a PASS device in operation.
3. PASS devices will be located on the SCBA’s right shoulder strap, for all department SCBA’s manufactured by MSA.
4. The PASS device shall not be removed from the SCBA by any personnel other than those authorized to perform repairs and maintenance on the device.
5. The device will be checked for proper functioning during the SCBA inspection at the beginning of each shift, after each use, whenever a replacement unit is issued, any time personnel are replaced by other personnel, or after any maintenance was performed on the SCBA.
6. The SCBA and the PASS unit are considered to be one piece, therefore; if one or the other is found to be malfunctioning, both units will be considered out of service.
7. The on duty Officer In Charge (OIC), once properly notified, will arrange for the immediate replacement of both the SCBA and PASS unit if either unit is found to be defective.
8. Batteries will automatically be replaced every six (6) months to assure each device has a fresh battery, and on an as-needed basis. Batteries are to be replaced January 1st and July 1st of each year.
9. Training utilizing the PASS devices will be conducted twice annually, or on an as-needed basis to maintain both the knowledge and skills necessary to inspect, use, and maintain the PASS devices. This training shall be mandatory for all personnel.
PASS Device Inspection

The following steps will be followed for PASS inspection:

1. Check for visible damage to device. This includes scratches, burns, cracks, tears or anything that one may deem detrimental to the functionality of the PASS device.
2. Place the PASS device in the “Alarm” mode by pressing the alarm button on the front of the PASS device and holding it for three (3) seconds. A loud, pulsating distress sound should sound. Let PASS device sound for five (5) seconds.
3. Press the yellow button on the right side of the PASS device two (2) times within one (1) second to deactivate the alarm. Press two (2) more times to clear the PASS device.
4. After testing the manually alarm, place the PASS device down and leave it motionless. Within 20 seconds a pulsating distress sound should activate and progressively increase in volume until it fully activates. Allow the PASS device to alarm for at least ten (10) seconds.
5. Turn the device off by pressing the yellow button on the right side of the PASS device two (2) times within one (1) second to deactivate the alarm. Press two (2) more times to clear the PASS device and then two (2) more times to deactivate the PASS device.

PASS Device Malfunction

The following steps will be followed when a device is found to be malfunctioning:

1. Whenever a PASS device is found to be malfunctioning, the device and the SCBA harness it is attached to shall be removed from service.
2. At all times the PASS device shall remain attached to the SCBA harness. The only exception shall be during repair or servicing by authorized personnel who will perform repairs and/or maintenance on the device.
3. The on duty Officer In Charge (OIC), once properly notified, will arrange for the immediate replacement of both the SCBA and PASS unit if either piece of equipment are found to be defective.
4. The SCAB/PASS unit shall be tagged as Out Of Service (OOS) using the approved OOS tags and a “Repair Order Form” shall be filled out and submitted to the OIC describing the malfunction.
SCBA with PASS

PASS Device Use

1. Anytime the SCBA air cylinder is turned on, the PASS device will automatically turn on and go into stand-by mode. The PASS device will light up and go through a self-check and then go silent until activated manually or by a period of motionless activity. The device will automatically sound an alarm should the firefighter become disabled and remain motionless for more than 20 seconds.

2. The PASS device may be manually activated by a firefighter in distress by pressing the alarm button on the front of the PASS device and holding it for three (3) seconds. A loud, pulsating distress sound should sound.

3. When the PASS device is in stand-by mode, the PASS device will start alerting with a low volume distress signal. If the fire fighter is not in distress, a simple tapping or shaking of the device will stop the tone and reset the device back to its stand-by mode.

4. Should the PASS device activate and go through all its alarm tones and enter full alarm or accidentally enter its full alarm mode, the firefighter can reset the device pressing the yellow button on the right side of the PASS device two (2) times within one (1) second to deactivate the alarm. Press two (2) more times to clear the PASS device.

5. The PASS device will sound a low volume “beep” sound as a low battery indication. If a low battery is indicated, notify the OIC and arrange for the immediate replacement of the batteries.

6. The OIC can authorize and designate personnel to service the PASS devices to replace batteries if that person has been trained in maintenance of the PASS device.

7. When SCBA are being worn, even in a non-hazardous environment, the wearer will arm the PASS device in the event of an accident.

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