

WAC 296-305-04001 Respiratory equipment protection. (1) Fire-fighter's self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) must, at a minimum, meet the requirements of the 1997 edition of NFPA 1981, Standard on Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for Fire Fighters. Equipment purchased after the effective date of this rule must meet the 2007 edition of NFPA 1981, Standard on Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for Emergency Services.

(2) Closed circuit SCBA must:

(a) Be positive pressure;

(b) Be NIOSH certified; and

(c) Have a minimum 30-minute service duration.

(3) Members using SCBAs must operate in teams of two or more.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, fire departments must adopt, maintain and implement a written respiratory protection program that addresses the requirements of chapter 296-842 WAC, Respiratory protection. This includes program administration, medical limitations, equipment limitations, equipment selection, inspection, use, maintenance, training, fit testing procedures, air quality, and program evaluation.

Note: Additional information on respirators and respirator usage can be found in ANSI Z88.2 - American National Standard for Respiratory Protection and various NFPA publications (1981, 1404, 1500, etc.).

(5) Reserved.

(6) When the fire department makes its own breathing air or uses vendor supplied breathing air, they must maintain documentation certifying breathing air quality. The breathing air must:

(a) Be tested at least quarterly by using an air sample taken from the same outlet and in the same manner as the respirator breathing air cylinders are filled or air line respirators are connected.

(b) Meet the requirements of either the 2003 edition of NFPA 1989, Standard on Breathing Air Quality for Fire and Emergency Services Respiratory Protection or the 1997 edition of ANSI/CGA G7-1 - Commodity Specification for Air, with a minimum air quality of grade D.

(c) Meet a water vapor level of 24 ppm or less.

(7) Fit testing must be conducted in accordance with this section and chapter 296-842 WAC, Respiratory protection.

(a) Each new member shall be tested by a qualitative or quantitative method before being permitted to use SCBA's in a hazardous atmosphere.

(b) Only firefighters with a properly fitting facepiece must be permitted by the fire department to function in a hazardous atmosphere with SCBA.

(c) Fit testing must be repeated:

(i) At least once every 12 months.

(ii) Whenever there are changes in the type of SCBA or facepiece used.

(iii) Whenever there are significant physical changes in the user. Example: Weight change of 10 percent or more, scarring of face seal area, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or any other condition that may affect the fit of the facepiece seal.

(d) The fit testing is done only in a negative-pressure mode. If the facepiece is modified for fit testing, the modification must not affect the normal fit of the device. Such modified devices must only be used for fit testing.

(e) The fit test procedures and test exercises described in WAC 296-842-15005 and 296-842-22010 must be followed unless stated otherwise in this chapter.

- (f) Respirator fit test records must include:
 - (i) Written guidelines for the respirator fit testing program including pass/fail criteria;
 - (ii) Type of respirator tested including manufacturer, model, and size;
 - (iii) Type of fit test and instrumentation or equipment used;
 - (iv) Name or identification of test operator;
 - (v) Name of person tested;
 - (vi) Date of test; and
 - (vii) Results of test.

Note: Firefighters should be issued individual facepieces.

(8) Facial hair, contact lenses, and eye and face protective devices.

(a) A negative pressure respirator, any self-contained breathing apparatus, or any respirator which is used in an atmosphere immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) equipped with a facepiece must not be worn if facial hair comes between the sealing periphery of the facepiece and the face or if facial hair interferes with the valve function.

(b) The wearer of a respirator must not be allowed to wear contact lenses if the risk of eye damage is increased by their use.

(c) If corrective lenses must be worn with a facepiece, they must be worn so as to not adversely affect the seal of the facepiece to the face. See WAC 296-842-18005(3).

(d) Straps or temple bars must not pass between the seal or surface of the respirator and the user's face.

(9) At the end of suppression activities (to include fire overhaul) and before returning to quarters:

(a) Gross/field decontamination must be performed on firefighters prior to removal of their respirator whenever firefighting activities resulted in exposure to a hazardous substance.

(b) When exchanging air supply bottles during suppression or overhaul activities, reasonable precautions must be taken to maintain uncontaminated atmosphere to the breathing zone and facepiece supply hose.

(10) Self-contained respiratory equipment must be available and used by all firefighters who enter into hazardous atmospheres during structural firefighting activities.

(11) Reserved.

(12) Respirators must be provided for, and shall be used by, all personnel working in areas where:

(a) The atmosphere is hazardous;

(b) The atmosphere is suspected of being hazardous; or

(c) The atmosphere may rapidly become hazardous.

Reference: See WAC 296-305-05002(13) for additional requirements.

(13) Reserved.

(14) Firefighters using a properly functioning SCBA must not compromise the protective integrity of the SCBA by removing the facepiece for any reason in hazardous atmospheres or in atmospheres where the quality of air is unknown.

(15) Firefighters must receive training for each type and manufacturer of respiratory equipment available for their use, the step-by-step procedure for donning the respirator and checking it for proper function. Required training must include:

(a) Recognizing hazards that may be encountered;

(b) Understanding the components of the respirator;

(c) Understanding the safety features and limitations of the respirator; and

(d) Donning and doffing the respirator.

(16) After completing such training, each firefighter must practice at least quarterly, for each type and manufacture of respirator available for use, the step-by-step procedure for donning the respirator and checking it for proper function.

(17) Members must be tested at least annually on the knowledge of respiratory protection equipment operation, safety, organizational policies and procedures, and facepiece seals, to the fire department's standard. Such records must remain part of the member training file.

(18) Members must be allowed to use only the make, model, and size respirator for which they have passed a fit test within the last 12 months.

(19) In cases where there is a reported failure of a respirator, it must be removed from service, tagged and recorded as such, and tested before being returned to service.

(20) Firefighters must be thoroughly trained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions on emergency procedures such as use of regulator bypass valve, corrective action for facepiece and breathing tube damage, and breathing directly from the regulator (where applicable).

(21) Reserved.

(22) SCBA cylinders must be hydrostatically tested within the periods specified by the manufacturer and the applicable governmental agencies.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 24-09-061, § 296-305-04001, filed 4/16/24, effective 5/17/24; WSR 18-22-116, § 296-305-04001, filed 11/6/18, effective 12/7/18. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and 29 C.F.R. 1910.156, Fire brigades. WSR 13-05-070, § 296-305-04001, filed 2/19/13, effective 1/1/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060. WSR 05-20-055, § 296-305-04001, filed 10/3/05, effective 12/1/05; WSR 05-03-093, § 296-305-04001, filed 1/18/05, effective 3/1/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].040, [49.17].050. WSR 02-12-098, § 296-305-04001, filed 6/5/02, effective 8/1/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040. WSR 99-05-080, § 296-305-04001, filed 2/17/99, effective 6/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].050 and [49.17].060. WSR 96-11-067, § 296-305-04001, filed 5/10/96, effective 1/1/97.]