

VIRTUA FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

AIR MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE

To establish a safe practice for the management of air contained within SCBAs while working in an IDLH atmosphere. Emphasis lies upon teams to exit a hazardous atmosphere prior to low air alarm activation.

PROCEDURE

1. While operating in a hazardous environment team members and company officers will use the Rule Of Air Management (ROAM)
 - A. Know how much air you have used and manage the air you have left.

Check the air in your SCBA early and often; report the level to your partner and company officer.
 - B. Leave the hazardous atmosphere before your low air alarm has sounded.

Consider initiating the exit process with fifty percent of your air remaining to find an exit or engage in a self rescue operation.
2. Air management responsibilities on the fireground.
 - A. Incident Commander
 - i. Maintains accountability of teams operating inside the IDLH atmosphere.
 - ii. Anticipates team replacement based upon conditions and radio reporting. If a team's air is low and, due to limited resources and/or the state of the firefight, that team cannot be reassigned to Rehab, the Incident Commander should instruct the team to do a bottle swap and then return to their assignment.
 - B. Company Officer
 - i. Develops the strategy for team air management.
 - ii. Directs team members to check their air level often.
 - iii. Communicates air/situation status to Incident Commander.
 - iv. Maintains situation awareness and orientation to exit.
 - v. Determines when to exit prompted by the first team member reaching fifty percent of their air remaining.
 - C. Firefighter
 - i. Responsible for knowledge of their personal air consumption.
 - ii. Must always be aware of the amount of air remaining in their SCBA.
 - iii. Must communicate their air status with other team members.
3. Status and air level reporting.
 - A. Company officers will report to the Incident Commander when the first member of their team has reached fifty percent air capacity. This report should be in the CARA format: Condition, Action, Resources, Air.
 - B. Company officers or lead firefighters should consider an emergency traffic report at low air alarm activations when life threatening conditions exist.

- C. All members should consider a MAYDAY after a low air alarm activation. Consider calling a MAYDAY based on
- i. Disorientation.
 - ii. Unknown travel distance to exit.
 - iv. Need for RIT assistance.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Use the rule of one-thirds as a strategy to manage team air.
Work Period + Exit Time+ Margin of Error for Self Rescue.
- Low air alarm activations within an IDLH atmosphere should prompt awareness from nearby teams to ensure that the member with low air is exiting with his/her team.

