

San Mateo County Fire Service POLICIES AND STANDARDS MANUAL

Title: Overhaul Operations

Policy No. 2010-01

Adopted: 04/12/2010

Revised: XX/XX/XXXX

Purpose: To reduce exposure to products of combustion and unknown toxins to on-scene personnel during overhaul operations in IDLH atmospheres.

Policy: It is the policy of the San Mateo County Fire Chiefs that all fire companies shall follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

Background: Firefighters can be exposed to many different types of contaminants and toxins during overhaul procedures. A typical structure fire may involve destruction of plastics, foams, fabrics, carpets, asbestos-containing materials, and wood products. Gases, vapors, and airborne particulates are liberated when these materials are compromised by fire, and may remain in the overhaul environment for extended periods of time. While there are many types of masks and filters there is no one type which can cover the range of possible compounds. The only respiratory protection available to protect Firefighters in this type of environment is Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). Currently, there is no way to test for all the possible types of toxins or contaminants to deem an area safe to operate in without an SCBA.

Procedures: The Incident Commander should confer with Officers and Investigators to determine the size and scope of the overhaul operation and the resources needed. Based upon the determined parameters the following guidelines will be used.

1. All personnel entering the environment during overhaul operations shall wear Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) until such time the Safety Officer deems a non-existent IDLH atmosphere.
2. Companies should be rotated during overhaul operations as determined by the Safety Officer to prevent physical exhaustion. Once the company is rotated, they should report to Rehab if established.
3. The Incident Commander will determine the need for an Overhaul Group Supervisor depending on the size and scope of the overhaul operation.
4. Ventilation should be considered to remove containments in the overhaul area.

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5. Gross decontamination should be considered based on the scope and work of the overhaul operation.
6. All response personnel should follow home agency policies and procedures related to P.P.E. Decontamination.
7. All response personnel should follow home agency policies and procedures regarding exposure reporting.