APPLICATION

New York University [NYU] Housing employees required to use supplied-air respirators in an emergency situation.

PURPOSE

As part of its continuing effort to reduce exposure and risk to NYU employees, the Environmental Health & Safety Department [EH&S] implemented this program to provide information on all aspects of the use of supplied-air respiratory protection. This written program is designed to comply with the requirements of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA] Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134. Self Contained Breathing Apparatus [SCBA] units are currently stored in Housing facilities where refrigeration plants are in use. The NYU employees at these locations do not use the supplied-air devices except in an emergency situation.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Introduction

This program is designed to help reduce employee exposures where engineering controls are not feasible. The program consists of the following elements:

- Atmosphere-Supplying Respirators
- Medical Assessment of Employee Health
- Fit Testing Procedures
- Respirator Inspection and Maintenance
- Employee Training
- Record Keeping
- Periodic Program Review

2.0 Responsibility

2.1 The Senior Director of EH&S is responsible for implementing this program and serves as the first contact for employees concerned with respiratory protection. In addition, information and support is available through EH&S.
2.2 Department heads are responsible for specific training on the use and maintenance of the equipment. Employees are responsible for ensuring that they are capable of using and maintaining the equipment. It is the responsibility of the departments where this equipment is located to purchase the appropriate units and see that the inspections are performed [See Appendix A]. Replacement parts must be purchased from the original manufacturer for a respirator to maintain its NIOSH approval. EH&S can be contacted for recommendations.

2.3 The University Health Center [UHC] has the responsibility to perform medical evaluations for employee respiratory use.

3.0 Atmosphere Supplying Respirators

3.1 The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus [SCBA] is certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH] to offer a minimum protection factor of 500. Selection is based upon the physical and chemical properties of the air contaminant and the concentration level likely to be encountered by the employee.

3.2 Air cylinders are filled with Type I-Grade D breathing air. SCBA units are equipped with an alarm that will sound when the tank is at 25% capacity and with an emergency bypass valve in the event of inadequate airflow.

4.0 Medical Assessment of Employee Health

4.1 Prior to an assignment of respiratory protection, the employee’s health must be evaluated by a physician or other licensed health care professional [PLHCP] at the University Health Center [UHC]. Employees will complete the Respirator Use Form as well as a Medical Questionnaire and submit both to the Program Administrator in EH&S.

4.2 The PLHCP, through a medical history and a physical, if necessary, will determine if an employee’s health allows him or her to wear a respirator. Unless deemed necessary, medical evaluations will be performed once. However, the frequency of physical examinations will be at the discretion of the PLHCP.

5.0 Fit Testing Procedures

5.1 Before any employee may be required to use a respirator with a negative or positive pressure tight-fitting face-piece, the employee must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size respirator that will be used. This applies to all tight-fitting respirators, including air purifying and SCBA.
5.2 In addition, any one using a SCBA must be certified in the use, operation and maintenance of the device.

6.0 Respirator Inspection and Maintenance

6.1 Housing Facilities will inspect the SCBA units on a monthly basis. A copy of the written records of the inspections will be sent to EH&S to be maintained in the files. The inspection form in Appendix A offers an inspection guideline and may be used as a written record of the inspections.

6.2 The air cylinders of SCBA respirators must be hydrostatically tested every five years. It is the responsibility of the department to check the date stamped in the cylinders to ensure that this is done.

7.0 Employee Training

7.1 No employee will be permitted to work with a respirator until he or she has received annual training in SCBA respiratory protection. The training is provided by an outside consultant and covers the following topics:
   - Explanation of what would happen if respiratory protection were not used
   - Elements of the Respiratory Protection Program
   - Selection of respiratory protection and who is authorized to modify the selection
   - Medical surveillance program
   - Function, capabilities and limitations of the selected respiratory protection
   - Explanation of the operation of the respiratory protection, including how to don, check the fit and wear the respirator properly
   - Respirator maintenance including cleaning, inspection and storage

7.2 SCBA training requires the practice of properly donning the unit in addition to the annual program training.

8.0 Record Keeping

8.1 For each employee assigned a respirator, the following records will be maintained in the noted locations:
   - Medical records including copies of the Respirator Use Form/Medical Questionnaire and results of any physical examinations will be stored at the University Health Center [UHC]
   - Training and Fit Testing records will be maintained by EH&S
   - SCBA inspection records will be maintained in the departments where the units are stored and in the EH&S files.
9.0 Periodic Program Review

9.1 These guidelines and the NYU Respiratory Protection Program will be reviewed at least annually by EH&S and updated as necessary.

10.0 Appendices

Appendix A-SCBA Inspection Procedure and Record