**Boulder County Hazardous Materials Team**

Air Consumption and Work Duration

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| Guideline Number | 2010 |
| Approved By | Advisory Committee |
| Date | 4-26-2020 |

**Scope:** This guideline applies to all members of the Boulder County Hazardous Materials Team

**Purpose:** To establish a guideline for setting the work duration of teams making entry into the exclusion zone and define timelines to help prevent emergencies that arise due to limited air supplies

**Guideline:**

**General Information:**

* This guideline establishes the work durations to ensure that crews are able to function in a manner that maximizes operational effectiveness of their entries while still maintaining a significant safety factor to allow for unforeseen circumstances and decontamination time.
* This guideline accounts for the drastic variability in scene dynamics (travel distances, incident locations, topography) and personnel factors (fitness, individual oxygen demand, etc.) in establishing the parameters set forth.
* It is the responsibility of the Entry Team Leader assigned to the incident, in consultation with the BCHMT Group Supervisor, to determine the appropriate work duration for Entry Teams who have entered an exclusion zone and are performing victim rescues, reconnaissance, incident control objectives, and any other tasks or missions assigned to them.

**Standard Work Duration:**

* There are two different parameters due to a variance in bottle pressures utilized by the BCHMT (4500psi vs. 5500psi bottles). Whenever possible, efforts should be made to ensure that entry teams are using consistent equipment and identical bottle pressures.
* Standard work durations for Entry Teams will be set as follows:
* Thirty (30) Minutes from initial on-air to arrival at the Decon Corridor

***OR***

* SCBA Bottle Pressure of 2250psi on 5500psi bottles, at which point an Entry Team must initiate their retreat from an exclusion zone
* SCBA Bottle Pressure of 1800psi on 4500psi bottles, at which point an Entry Team must initiate their retreat from an exclusion zone
* **It is the responsibility of the Entry Team Lead to monitor the ‘on air’ time and maintain communication with the Entry Team of the time lapsed.**
* **It is the responsibility of the Entry Team to monitor their own air supply and maintain communications with the Entry Team Lead of their air status.**

**Work Duration Adjustment:**

* The initial work durations for an Entry Team are set to assist crews by having standard procedures and eliminate confusion during incident operations, however, there may be instances where these preestablished guidelines are not suitable for use due to incident parameters (i.e. Weather, etc.) or other factors that require adjustment.

**Work Duration Extensions:**

* It is the responsibility of the Entry Team leader to ensure that any change to the 30min/40%psi guideline is appropriate and does not cause unnecessary risk to the crews operating in an exclusion zone.
* The Entry Team Leader must communicate any adjustments to the 30min/40%psi guideline to the Entry Team, the BCHMT Group Supervisor, and the Incident Commander.
* Adjustments made to the initial 30min/40%psi guideline should be rare and the benefits of an extended entry should be carefully weighed against the risks by the Entry Group Supervisor, the BCHMT Group Supervisor, and Hazmat Safety Officer. Extending work durations beyond the 30min/40%psi guideline is not considered a routine practice.

**Air Reserves, Low-Air Alarms, and Maydays:**

* Air reserves inside of SCBA bottles (less than 40% of a full bottles’ capacity) are **NOT** to be considered as breathing air that is available for the completion of operational objectives or decontamination. It is the intent of the BCHMT to have all crews end their operations, exit the exclusion zone, and complete decontamination prior to the activation of any Low-Air Alarms.
* SCBA Low-Air Alarms that activate while crews are operating in an IDLH atmosphere or where crews are incapable of immediate self-rescue should be considered a MAYDAY situation and handled accordingly.