

# AIR MANAGEMENT

## PURPOSE

To establish a safe practice for the management of air contained within a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) while working in an atmosphere immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH). Emphasis lies upon crews to exit a hazardous atmosphere prior to low air alarm activation.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. While operating in a hazardous environment crew members and Company Officers will use the RULE OF AIR MANAGEMENT:

- A. Know how much air you have used and manage the air you have left.
  - i. Check the air in your SCBA early and often; be prepared to report the level to your partner and Crew Leader.
- B. Leave the hazardous atmosphere before your low air alarm has sounded.
  - i. 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 crews operating inside the IDLH atmosphere.
  - ii. Anticipates crew replacement based upon conditions and radio reporting.
- B. Crew Leader:
  - i. Develops the strategy for crew air management.
  - ii. Directs crew members to check their air level often.
  - iii. Communicates air/situation status to ICS functionary (Command, Division, etc.).
  - iv. Maintains situation awareness and orientation to exit.
  - v. Determines when to exit prompted by the first crew member reaching fifty percent of their SCBA 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 crew members.
  - iv. Notify Crew Leader at 50% air.

### 3. Status and air level reporting.

- A. Crew Leaders will report to Command, Division or Operations when the first member of their crew has reached fifty percent SCBA air capacity. This report should be in the CAAN format: Condition, Action, Air, Needs.
- B. Crew Leaders will report air status at the request of Command, Operations, or Division.
- C. Crew Leaders should consider an emergency traffic report at low air alarm activations when life threatening conditions exist.
- D. All members should consider a **MAYDAY** after low-air alarm activation, but consider situational awareness.
  - i. Consider calling a MAYDAY based on:
  - ii. Disorientation.
  - iii. Unknown travel distance to exit.
  - iv. Need for RIT assistance.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

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