

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Respiratory Protection



Department: Operations

SOP#127

Applicable to: All Staff

Effective Date: 1 Dec 2020

3 Pages

Authority: Chief Of Operations

Applicable CAAS Standard:

Purpose:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) is to outline the position of Brighton Volunteer Ambulance (BVA) regarding the importance of the safe and effective use of respiratory protection, and address additional restrictions and requirements made necessary by NYS DOH mandates regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, and may be applicable during other National respiratory illness disasters.

Scope:

The scope of this document applies to all road staff.

Guideline:

1. Program Administration:
 - a. The BVA Health & Safety Officer is responsible for the overall implementation and maintenance of the Respiratory Protection Program. Their duties include:
 - i. Determining which tasks require respiratory protection;
 - ii. Selecting/supplying the proper respirator for the specific application. BVA currently uses as respirators:
 1. N95 particulate filtering facepiece
 - iii. Conducting personnel training and conducting or arranging for fit testing;
 - iv. Ensuring that personnel clean, maintain and properly store respirators;
 - v. Conducting periodic evaluation of the respiratory program to ensure that it is achieving its desired goal;
 - vi. Ensuring that the respirators are available for use;
 - vii. Conducting periodic inspections to ensure that respirators are maintained properly and accessible to personnel.
 - b. Operations officers are responsible for ensuring that personnel wear the required respirators.
 - c. Personnel are responsible for:
 - i. Using the respiratory protection in accordance with the training received;
 - ii. Disposing of respirators or used canisters after use and, if the respirator is kept in a vehicle, replacing it with a new one, or arranging for such replacement with the Health & Safety Officer.
2. Respiratory Protection Selection:
 - a. The BVA Health & Safety Officer is responsible for selecting and providing the appropriate respiratory protection devices for use by BVA personnel. The Health & Safety Officer will select the appropriate respirators, and personnel shall use the most appropriate device, based upon the following Elements:
 - i. The types and concentration of airborne contaminants;
 - ii. The characteristics and location of the hazardous area;
 - iii. The workers' activities in the hazardous area;

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- iv. The capabilities and limitation of the respirators;
- v. Duration of respirator use;
- vi. According to practices for respiratory protection and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z88.2-1980.
- b. Respirators approved for use will be dynamic and based on availability, pricing, and fit.
- 3. Maintenance, Cleaning, Inspection, Storage:
 - a. All respirators used by BVA are single-use disposable types or have single-use disposable canisters. N95 masks, canisters for air-purifying respirators, and escape hoods will not be re-used after use.
 - b. Prior to using the respirator, the personnel will visibly check the respirator for any defects. If any are found, the respirator is to be discarded, or in the case of air-purifying respirators, returned to the Safety Officer for repair or replacement.
 - c. All respirators must be properly stored to protect them from damage due to environmental factors (sunlight, temperature extremes, etc.) and chemicals. When respirators are not in use, they are to be stored in their original container and kept in a clean area. The respirator will be stored in its normal position to prevent it from taking a permanent distorted shape.
 - d. The BVA Health & Safety Officer is responsible for the inventory of the respirators.
- 4. Training
 - a. All personnel who are required to use respiratory protection will be instructed on the proper selection, use, and limitations of this equipment. This training will be provided prior to any assignment requiring the use of such equipment. The training conducted by the BVA Health & Safety Officer will also include information on:
 - i. Nature of the respiratory hazard and what may happen if the respirator is not used properly;
 - ii. Engineering and administrative controls being used and the need for the respirator as added protection;
 - iii. Reason(s) for selection of a particular type of respirator, limitations of the selected respirator, methods of donning a respirator and checking the fit (negative and positive checks), and operation;
 - iv. Proper wear of the respirator, respirator maintenance and storage;
 - v. Proper method of handling emergency situations, and;
 - vi. A record of personnel names, dates and type of initial training and subsequent refresher training will be recorded.
- 5. Fit Testing
 - a. It is well recognized that no one respirator will fit every individual. Therefore, to provide the appropriate respirator, fit testing will be performed to ensure a tight seal between the facepiece and wearer. Disposable respirators will, generally, fit all personnel provided the straps and nose clamp are adjusted properly.
 - b. Fit testing will be conducted prior to employment and once each year, by a person qualified by, and using equipment approved by, New York State Public Employee Safety and Health (PESH).

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6. Medical Information
 - a. Individuals assigned to tasks that require the use of respiratory protection will have a medical evaluation to determine if they are able to perform the work while wearing a respirator.
 - b. The medical examinations will be reviewed by the BVA physician, or by a qualified physician associated with our selected Occupational Health Services vendor.
 - c. The examination will be given prior to personnel being allowed to wear a respirator. Periodic examinations will be conducted as necessary based on the PLHCP professional opinion(s) and any other contributing factors (i.e., change in physical status, anatomy, vision, hearing, etc.).
7. Program Evaluation
 - a. This section requires the employer to conduct evaluations of the workplace to ensure that the written Respiratory Protection Program is being properly implemented, and to consult personnel to ensure that they are using the respirators properly.
 - i. The BVA Health & Safety Officer shall conduct evaluations of the workplace as necessary to ensure that the provisions of the current written program are being effectively implemented and that it continues to be effective.
 - ii. The BVA Health & Safety Officer shall regularly consult personnel required to use respirators to assess the personnel's views on program effectiveness and to identify any problems. Any problems that are identified during this assessment shall be corrected. Factors to be assessed include, but are not limited to:
 1. Respirator fit (including ability to use the respirator without interfering with effective workplace performance);
 2. Appropriate respirator selection for the hazards to which the personnel is Exposed;
 3. Proper respirator use under the workplace conditions the personnel encounters;
And
 4. Proper respirator maintenance.
8. Record Keeping
 - a. Medical Evaluations or physicians Medical Determinations and fit testing records will be maintained by the Safety Officer.
 - b. Completed records of training for all personnel will be maintained by the BVA Health & Safety
9. Medical Evaluation
 - a. Records of medical evaluations required by this section must be retained and made available in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020.
10. Facial Hair
 - a. Those who desire to maintain facial hair will sign a Release of Liability form which releases BVA from liability in the event a provider contracts an illness otherwise preventable by wearing appropriate respiratory protection. Facial hair is anything that will prevent a proper seal of a particulate filter mask during FIT Testing.
11. COVID - See SOG 164.19 Respiratory Protection during COVID.

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