



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: CDD District Manager, All Field Managers
(*Attention - District/Regional and Field Office FMO's*)

From: State Director

Subject: California BLM Policy for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Units on BLM Engines

This IB reiterates policy relating to use of SCBA's by BLM California employees.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units are used in some California wildland fire organizations. Their use provides additional protection to firefighters responding to vehicle fires, dump fires and structure fires that threaten wildlands. Increased occurrence of these types of fires has increased the potential exposure to toxic smoke and gases at wildland fire incidents. It is BLM California's policy that personnel not be exposed to a hazardous atmosphere without the available benefit of SCBA's.

This IB reiterates California BLM policy regarding the use of SCBA's. Standards for SCBA use are found in the updated BLM California SCBA Standard Operating Procedures Guide. A BLM California SCBA Training Course Guide has also been developed. Both guides are on CD Rom and will be distributed to all Field Office's. District/Region must meet the standards set for medical requirements, equipment, training and clothing as established in the BLM California SCBA Standard Operating Procedures Guide prior to implementation of SCBA on Type 3 Engines.

The California BLM Fire Equipment Committee has taken steps to provide protection to the firefighter by purchasing new positive pressure SCBA units for all Type 3 engines (class 665) within California. These SCBA units are required to be installed on all the Type 3 engines.

The BLM emphasis in using SCBA units on structure fires will continue to be to preserve life and protect property. Our policy of NOT entering structures for suppression efforts will remain the same. We will continue to provide structure protection from the exterior only.

Use of SCBA on vehicle fires will be done according to the guide. The SCBA units will be worn throughout the extinguishment and mop-up phases of this type of incident. To offer maximum safety to

the firefighter during these types of fires, foam will be utilized at all times during extinguishment and mop-up.

Our objective for installing the SCBA's is not to provide a new way for our firefighters to fight fires, but provide protection from what they are already exposed to.

If you have any questions or need additional copies of the guide and training manual, please contact Gary Cardoza, State Fire Equipment Operations, at 916-978-4434.

Signed by:
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Associate State Director

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Records Management