Mine Safety and Health Admin., Labor

§ 49.17 Physical requirements for mine rescue team.

(a) Each member of a mine rescue team shall be examined annually by a physician who shall certify that each person is physically fit to perform

(1) Twelve self-contained breathing apparatuses, each with a minimum of 4 hours capacity (approved by MSHA and NIOSH under 42 CFR part 84, subpart H), and any necessary equipment for testing such breathing apparatuses.

(2) A portable supply of liquid air, liquid oxygen, pressurized oxygen, or oxygen generating chemicals, and carbon dioxide absorbent chemicals, as applicable to the supplied breathing apparatus and sufficient to sustain each team for 8 hours while using the breathing apparatus during rescue operations.

(3) Two extra, fully-charged oxygen bottles for every six self-contained breathing apparatuses.

(4) One oxygen pump or a cascading system, compatible with the supplied breathing apparatus.

(5) Twelve permissible cap lamps and a charging rack.

(6) Four gas detectors appropriate for each type of gas that may be encountered at the mines served. Gas detectors must measure concentrations of methane from 0.0 percent to 100 percent of volume, oxygen from 0.0 percent to at least 20 percent of volume, and carbon monoxide from 0.0 parts per million to at least 9,999 parts per million.

(7) One portable mine rescue communication system (approved under part 23 of this title) or a sound-powered communication system.

(i) The wires or cable to the communication system shall be of sufficient tensile strength to be used as a manual communication system.

(ii) These communication systems shall be at least 1,000 feet in length.

(8) Necessary spare parts and tools for repairing the breathing apparatus and communication system.

(b) Mine rescue apparatus and equipment shall be maintained in a manner that will ensure readiness for immediate use.

(1) A person trained in the use and care of breathing apparatus shall inspect and test the apparatus at intervals not exceeding 30 days and shall certify by signature and date that the inspections and tests were done.

(2) When the inspection indicates that a corrective action is necessary, the corrective action shall be made and the person shall record the corrective action taken.

(3) The certification and the record of corrective action shall be maintained at the mine rescue station for a period of 1 year and made available on request to an authorized representative of the Secretary.

(73 FR 53123, Sept. 15, 2008)
§ 49.18 Training for mine rescue teams.

(a) Prior to serving on a mine rescue team each member shall complete, at a minimum, an initial 20-hour course of instruction as prescribed by MSHA’s Office of Educational Policy and Development, in the use, care, and maintenance of the type of breathing apparatus which will be used by the mine rescue team.

(b) Upon completion of the initial training, all team members shall receive at least 96 hours of refresher training annually, which shall include participation in local mine rescue contests and training at the covered mine.

Training shall be given at least 8 hours every 2 months and shall consist of:

1. Sessions underground at least once each 6 months;
2. The wearing and use of the breathing apparatus by team members for a period of at least 2 hours while under oxygen every 2 months;
3. Where applicable, the use, care, capabilities, and limitations of auxiliary mine rescue equipment, or a different breathing apparatus;
4. Advanced mine rescue training and procedures, as prescribed by MSHA’s Office of Educational Policy and Development;
5. Mine map training and ventilation procedures; and
6. The wearing of mine rescue apparatus while in smoke, simulated smoke, or an equivalent environment at least once during each 12-month period.

(c) A mine rescue team member will be ineligible to serve on a team if more than 8 hours of training is missed during 1 year, unless additional training is received to make up for the time missed.

(d) The training courses required by this section shall be conducted by instructors who have been employed in an underground mine and have had a minimum of 1 year experience as a mine rescue team member or a mine rescue instructor within the past 5 years, and who have received MSHA approval through:

1. Completion of an MSHA or State approved instructor’s training course and the program of instruction in the subject matter to be taught.
2. Designation by the District Manager as approved instructors to teach specific courses, based on their qualifications and teaching experience outlined above. Previously approved instructors need not be re-designated to teach the approved courses as long as they have taught those courses within the 24 months prior to the effective date of this part.

(e) The District Manager may revoke an instructor’s approval for good cause. A written statement revoking the approval together with reasons for revocation shall be provided the instructor. The affected instructor may appeal the decision of the District Manager by