

# **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **Q & A**

### **Do the physical capability evaluations for fire fighters need to be in writing?**

No, it is not a requirement that they are in writing but a system must be in place to evaluate firefighters. This is most easily done by the fire department observing the firefighters during regular drill activities.

### **Can fire departments be part of the city or county safety committee?**

Fire Departments must have their own safety committee if they meet the criteria in OAR Chapter 437, Division 1. They may be a part of a citywide committee, but must also have an established safety committee that functions separately.

### **Which version of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Incident Management 1561 rule should we use?**

Since the 1995 edition is the one referenced in Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (Oregon OSHA) rules, this edition is the basis for enforcement. The NFPA 2000 edition has the same information as the 1995 edition, with some additions. However, OSHA can only enforce the provisions in the 1995 edition.

### **What rules are ranchers who participate in fire suppression required to follow?**

They are required to follow the rules in OAR, Chapter 437, Division 4 if their land is used for farming or Division 7 if their land is used for timber.

### **What kind of training should fire fighters receive?**

The training must be adequate for the jobs assigned. The training provided by the Department of Public Safety Standards & Training (DPSST) is a good guideline, however is only required for the Entry Level firefighter. The fire department training plan should include the type, duration and frequency of training required.

### **What respirator checks should fire departments be doing?**

They are required to conduct a pre-use and after use cleaning and testing. Even if the respirator is not used, there should be a monthly check to make sure that the unit is ready for use. Pre-use means inspected prior to entering an Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) atmosphere. Basic firefighter training standards of the DPSST include this pre-use check as the equipment is donned.

### **What are the requirements for containment of the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) tank during filling?**

The employer must follow either the SCBA manufacturer or filling station manufacturer recommendations.

**Are fire departments required to test the hydrants they use?**

No, there are no requirements that fire departments test the fire hydrants.

**What is acceptable tire service life or tread wear?**

There is no accepted service life for fire equipment tires. Look at the tread left on the tire and refer to the current standard OAR 437-02-182(31), which addresses wear and deterioration.

**What are fire departments required to have for permit required confined space rescues?**

Employers who have permit required confined space must provide rescue and emergency services. If the employer expects the fire department to provide those services, then Division 2, Subdivision J, 1910.146(k) would apply.

**What level of hazardous material training are firefighters required to have?**

The training requirements in OAR Chapter 437, Division 2, Subdivision L states that the training must be at a level adequate for the jobs assigned or reasonably expected. The training requirements in 1910.120(q)(6)-(8) establish an industry standard. The level of the department's emergency response is identified in their response plans. The rule that applies to hazardous material training, based on the types of response identified in the plan, is 437-02-182(10)(a).

**What are the requirements for cleaning turnouts (protective clothing)?**

Refer to OAR 437-002-0182 Appendix A, manufacturer recommendations, or Oregon OSHA Program Directive-A137. Program Directives can be found on the Oregon OSHA website, <http://www.orosha.org>

**How much damage is allowed to turnouts before they have to be replaced?**

The NFPA states that any damage must be repaired to manufacturers' specification. Below is an excerpt from the NFPA inspection procedure.

*INSPECTION PROCEDURE FOR TURNOUTS:*

*Inspections of turnouts are conducted on a frequent basis by members to ensure the suitability for use. The fire department (employer) inspects all protective clothing at least annually. The inspection confirms the following:*

- 1) All materials are free from tears, embrittlement, and fraying.*
- 2) Seams are intact and show no signs of excessive wear.*
- 3) Reflective trim shows no signs of abrasion or loss of reflectivity due to heat exposure.*
- 4) All pockets, knee pads, and other accessory items are firmly attached to the garment and show no signs of excessive wear.*
- 5) Sleeve and pant cuffs show no signs of fraying.*
- 6) The entire garment is free from excessive dirt and stains.*
- 7) Where a fabric color change is noted, a condition that could be caused by high heat exposure, ultraviolet exposure (sunlight) or, chemical exposure, the entire area is checked for loss of tear strength. (per manufacturer)*

*The fire department has established a written maintenance and inspection program for protective clothing and equipment. Protective clothing and equipment is used and maintained in accordance with manufacturers instructions. During the inspection, if any damage is noted, the protective clothing or equipment is first taken out of service and repaired or replaced according to manufacturers specifications.*

**Are fire departments required to have the traffic control/flagger certificate?**

Firefighters who direct traffic do not need a flagger certificate, but they do need to have adequate training for the jobs assigned.

**Are fire departments required to have patient lifting equipment?**

No, they are not required to have patient lifting equipment. However, if they have accepted disabling claims due to patient lifting, this could trigger an inspection by Oregon OSHA. Oregon OSHA could address these injuries through a hazard letter.

If you have questions regarding compliance with Oregon OSHA rules relating to fire departments, please call the Oregon OSHA Technical Section at (503) 378-3272 or e-mail at [tech.web@state.or.us](mailto:tech.web@state.or.us)

**Additional Information:**

Grant information - <http://www.grants.gov> and <http://www.firehouse.com/funding/>

BBP handout - <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3130.pdf>

NIOSH Firefighter website- <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/responders.html#firefighters>