

Respirators for IDLH Atmospheres

According to 29 CFR 1910.134(b), an immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) atmosphere means an atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a dangerous atmosphere.

According to 29 CFR 1910.134(d)(2), employers must provide the following respirators for employee use in IDLH atmospheres:

- A full face piece pressure demand SCBA certified by NIOSH for a minimum service life of thirty minutes, or
- A combination full face piece pressure demand supplied-air respirator (SAR) with auxiliary self-contained air supply.
- Respirators provided only for escape from IDLH atmospheres shall be NIOSH-certified for escape from the atmosphere in which they will be used.
- All oxygen-deficient atmospheres shall be considered IDLH. Exception: If the employer demonstrates that, under all foreseeable conditions, the oxygen concentration can be maintained within the ranges specified in Table II of 29 CFR 1910.134 (d)(3)(4)(C) (i.e., for the altitudes set out in the table), then any atmosphere-supplying respirator may be used.