

# East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District

	<b>SOP 605 Air Management</b>	
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## Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to establish Air Management guidelines. Air Management is critical to the health and safety of our members. Firefighters need to manage their air supply similar to SCUBA divers. SCUBA divers are constantly aware of their air consumption and the amount of air they have left in their tank(s).
- *Firefighters should exit the fire building or hazardous atmosphere before their low air warning bell begins ringing. This gives them reserve air should something go wrong. A low-air warning bell ringing at an emergency scene should become an audible warning that a firefighter may be in trouble.*

## Scope

- This guideline shall apply to all members of the East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District.

## Definitions

- Air Management: An ongoing assessment of air consumption by individual firefighters and/or teams who are breathing air from their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). Firefighters in a hazardous atmosphere must continually check their pressure gauges to know how much air they have left in their bottle.
- The Rule of Air Management: Know how much air you have used and manage the amount of air you have left in your bottle so that you leave the hazardous atmosphere **before** your SCBA low-air warning bell begins to ring.
- Hazardous Atmosphere: Any atmosphere which is oxygen deficient or which contains a toxic and/or disease-producing contaminant. These atmospheres can be immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH), or not.
- IDLH: Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health

## Air Management Guideline

It is the expectation that all East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District members utilizing Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) will:

- Perform a READY check prior to entering the IDLH (Radio, Equipment, Air, Duties, Yes)
- Check their air levels before they enter the hazardous atmosphere. Members must have a minimum of 4050 psi in their cylinder in order to make entry into a hazardous atmosphere. This check can be done during the pre-entry READY check.
- Follow the Rule of Air Management when operating in any hazardous atmosphere.
- **When the first member of any team has their 50% capacity (2250 PSI) Heads-Up Display (HUD) light activate (two flashing amber lights), the officer/team leader shall radio to the proper ICS functionary (Command, Division, etc.) that the team is at 50% air. This allows the ICS functionary to pre-plan for replacing that team in the hazardous atmosphere.**
- If a team member works into their reserve air and their low-air warning bell begins to ring in the hazard area, the officer/team leader shall report over the radio to the proper ICS functionary (Command, Division, etc) their unit signature, their location, that a team member's low-air warning bell is ringing, and an estimation of how close they are to the exit.

## **How Air Management Works**

- Air management is each firefighter's responsibility and is closely related to situational awareness. Firefighters must make sure that they have a full cylinder before they enter the hazardous atmosphere. Once inside the hazardous atmosphere, firefighters must look at their pressure gauges at intervals and inform their officer/team leader what their air situation is.
- The Officer/team leader should take the lead in air management. Officer's and team leaders must make the decision when to exit so that the team is out of the hazardous atmosphere before their team's low-air warning bells begin to ring. There are many factors that affect the duration of the team's air supply, such as: fire conditions, work rates, aerobic fitness of the team members, and stress.
- **Officers and team leaders must notify the Incident Commander (IC) or their ICS functionary (Command, Division, etc.) when their first team member's 50% HUD light activates, or their bottle is at 50% capacity (2250 PSI). This allows the ICS functionary to be informed of the team's air situation and to pre-plan for replacing that team in the IDLH environment.**

- All firefighters are expected to be out of the hazardous atmosphere before their low-air warning bells begin to ring.
- If members hear a low-air warning bell ringing in the hazardous atmosphere, and there is not an immediate radio report from the team whose bell is ringing, that bell should be considered an emergency alarm until proven otherwise.