

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)- is not detectable by sight or smell. OSHA recommends full SCBA protection for any CO levels above 50 parts per million. NIOSH recommends full SCBA protection for any CO levels above 35 parts per million. There are many meters on the market capable of monitoring CO.

SMOKE - Any smoke present in a structure should be assumed to be toxic. Full SCBA should be worn anytime a detectable amount of smoke is present.

ASBESTOS - Not detectable by sight or smell. Insulation and spray on type ceiling textures dating back prior to 1980 that has been disturbed should be suspect for asbestos. Full SCBA or OSHA / NIOSH approved high efficiency respirator masks will provide respiratory protection against asbestos.

DUST - Normally present at any fire scene. The OSHA / NIOSH respirator masks or full SCBA should be used when dust is a problem. You should also launder your clothing after each incident when there is a possibility of contamination.

SUMMARY: Respiratory protection should be worn at all fire scenes unless carbon monoxide, smoke, asbestos and dust can be ruled out. Keep in mind that the OSHA / NIOSH respirator masks offer protection against asbestos and dust only and does not offer protection against carbon monoxide and smoke.

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