



INCIDENT REHABILITATION (REHAB)

It's essential to provide rehabilitation and medical monitoring at the scene to establish the mental and physical condition of personnel participating in tactical operations and training. Carcinogens can be absorbed, inhaled and ingested at a fire scene. Proper decontamination and rehabilitation procedures reduce exposures to carcinogens during these critical times.

- Rehab must be located in a place that allows enough space and protection from adverse environmental conditions including fire, smoke, exhaust, and extreme heat and cold. An ideal location would be out of direct sight of the working incident, with room for separate areas to remove PPE, a rest and evaluation area, a treatment area, and access to a restroom when possible.
- Personnel are to rotate through rehab after an IDLH work period of 2/30s or 1/45-minute SCBA cylinder or anytime the environment, workload and/or atmospheric conditions indicate the probability of injury or temperature-related illness to personnel. This includes, but is not limited to, working fires and hazmat incidents when encapsulating suits are worn.
- Before entering rehab, fire fighters are to use a personal hand-washing station with water, hand soap and towels. In lieu of soap and water, disposable wipes can be used for hands, face and neck.
- Each time a fire fighter enters rehab, an evaluation will occur for the following: name, time and unit; mental status; and any

physical symptoms such as a chief complaint of shortness of breath, poor gait, confusion, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, cramps, or aches and pains. All symptoms will be thoroughly evaluated by the appropriate EMS level of care.

- Personnel not working in the IDLH but within the hazard zone (pump operators, IC, etc.) should be observed and periodically monitored for potential exposure to toxic gases and/or heat and cold stress.
- In warm weather, removal of turnout gear is necessary to allow the body's temperature-regulating mechanism to function properly. The duration of the ventilation process will depend on the workload and atmospheric air temperatures.
- Tarps for shade and electric fans to provide airflow may be necessary during hot weather, and other appropriate shelter should be utilized during inclement weather.
- Fluid replacement is necessary to maintain the high metabolic demand placed on fire fighters during emergency operations. It is recommended that members drink one liter of water per hour for several hours to replace fluids lost due to dehydration. After one hour, electrolyte additives should be added to the water source (NFPA 1584).
- Caffeinated beverages and "energy drinks" should be avoided during emergency incidents due to their diuretic effect. High usage of energy drinks also has been linked to cardiac issues.