TACTICAL ACTION GUIDELINES

1. NUMBER: 9.1.5

2. SUBJECT: ***Breathing Apparatus Maintenance and Use***

3. POLICY: Breathing apparatus shall be properly maintained and worn by all persons who enter into, or near a hazardous atmosphere, as defined by this Policy or the Standard Operating Procedures of Grant County Fire District 3 or at the direction of the Incident Commander.

4. SCOPE: This Policy and Procedure is applicable to all personnel of Grant County Fire District 3.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

   A. It shall be the responsibility of the District Fire Chief or designee to enforce this Policy and Procedure.

6. PROCEDURE:

   A. Whenever firefighters, rescuers and investigators enter any structure or other space containing a hazardous atmosphere at least two (2) people with breathing apparatus shall stand by free of the atmosphere to enter and afford a rescue. All activities requiring entry into hazardous atmosphere will be by the use of the buddy system.

   B. Only positive pressure breathing apparatus shall be worn.

   C. The Training Officer shall be designated to be in charge of qualifying firefighters to use breathing apparatus.

   D. All breathing apparatus will be inspected monthly and after each use.

   E. Maintenance and repair of breathing equipment shall be done only by persons qualified and approved by the District Fire Chief or designee, and in accordance with manufacturer's and nationally recognized standards (NFPA and NIOSH, etc.).

   F. No personnel will wear a breathing apparatus in a hazardous atmosphere until he/she has received breathing apparatus training and has qualified in its use for that quarter.

G. All firefighters will receive two hours or more per quarter of the Fire District's breathing apparatus training and return to service cleaning. This will be as outlined in the Washington State Fire Service Training Program. Time spent in doing monthly maintenance checks, or after use cleaning checks, will be considered part of this required time.

H. On all operations requiring the use of breathing apparatus, communications shall be maintained between personnel wearing respirators and persons in non-contaminated environment. This may be by portable radio and or lifelines.

I. Breathing apparatus shall not be worn when any of the following conditions preventing a seal of the respirator or creating an unsafe condition to the wearer. (WAC-296-62-071 to 07121, WAC-296-073 to 07316, WAC-296-305-063, 090 and 095)

1. A person who has hair (excessive daily beard growth, mustache, sideburns, beard, low hairline, bangs) which passes between the face and the sealing surface of the facepiece, preventing a seal, shall not be permitted to wear a breathing apparatus.
2. Spectacles which have temple bows or straps which pass between the sealing surface of a facepiece and the wearer's face shall be tested for a seal. If a seal is unobtainable, the spectacles may not be used.
3. A head covering which passes between the sealing surface of a facepiece and the wearers face shall not be used.
4. If scars, hollow temples, excessively protruding cheekbones, deep creases in facial skin, the absence of teeth or dentures, or unusual facial configurations prevent a seal of a respirator facepiece to a wearer's face, the person shall not be permitted to wear the respirator.

J. All personnel shall resist the tendency to prematurely remove breathing apparatus. The determination as to the removal of breathing apparatus will be made only by the incident commander.

K. All Personnel shall be Fit Tested per WAC 296-842-15005.

L. Following the use of an SCBA mask for any reason — whether during an incident response or training exercise — the mask and regulator shall be decontaminated at the station to ensure proper hygiene, safety, and equipment readiness.