

described in the Training Module, "Portable Fresh Air Breathing Stations (PFABS) Worker Training." Operators are taught to not use the PFABS if "a sufficient air supply is not available." This is described as at least 600 psig reading for the air cylinder to be used. One of the operators looked at the air cylinder pressure gauges prior to use and did not remember the reading. Two operators did not check the air supply but stated the check was to be made by the attendant. The attendant did check the air cylinder pressure gauges prior to work but did not remember the readings. Training records documented where the operators wearing supplied air respirators during this event had demonstrated their ability to correctly use the PFABS. PFABS use as described in the training module and demonstrated by the operators involved, during their training, would have minimized the chances for loss of breathing air during TSCAI repackaging at K-1423. Therefore, lack of implementation of all PFABS use requirements during this event was determined to be the direct cause.

Some contributing causes were the frequency of training was not adequate. During the investigation workers said they could not remember all the requirements for proper use of the PFABS. No retraining requirements had been established.

Additionally, the operator who actually acted as the attendant was originally assigned to assist another operator in dumping operations. These assignments were documented on the assignment sheet for the job. The operator originally assigned as the PFABS attendant did not feel comfortable performing as the PFABS attendant and informed the supervisor. The supervisor instructed another operator to be the attendant. This change was not documented on the assignment sheet. Confusion over the job assignment caused the attendant to perform the original assignment in addition to attendant responsibilities. This explained why the attendant did not constantly monitor the PFABS pressure gauges; the operator was also assisting in dumping activities. The supervisor was reminded that job assignments had to be clearly understood by those performing them, especially where a change of duties is involved.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: Evaluate current work activities to determine the adequacy of administrative controls applied based on the level of risk to health and safety, environment, and mission of the program. Take appropriate action based upon the evaluation. Evaluate current operating procedures and work activities and establish refresher-training requirements as needed based on the level of risk to health and safety, environment, and mission of the program.

PRIORITY DESCRIPTOR: Blue/Information

FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY(S) (DOE): Training & Qualifications; Radiological Protection; Occupational Safety & Health

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KEYWORDS: portable fresh air breathing station, PFABS

REFERENCES: Occurrence Report ORO--BJC-K25WASTMAN-1999-0009

HAZARDS: Personnel Protection

WORK ACTIVITY: Waste Remediation, Material/Material Handling

FOLLOW-UP ACTION: Information in this report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. As means of measuring the effectiveness of this report please notify Joanne E. Schutt at (423)574-1248, e-mail at s6u@ornl.gov of any action taken as a result of this report or of any technical inaccuracies you find. Your feedback is important and appreciated.