

## (A) Initial Evaluation

- I. The employer should meet with the prospective rescue service to facilitate the evaluations required by §§1910.146(k)(1)(i) and §§1910.146(k)(1)(ii). At a minimum, if an off-site rescue service is being considered, the employer must contact the service to plan and coordinate the evaluations required by the standard. Merely posting the service's number or planning to rely on the 911 emergency phone number to obtain these services at the time of a permit space emergency would not comply with paragraph (k)(1) of the standard.
- II. The capabilities required of a rescue service vary with the type of permit spaces from which rescue may be necessary and the hazards likely to be encountered in those spaces. Answering the questions below will assist employers in determining whether the rescue service is capable of performing rescues in the permit spaces present at the employer's workplace.
  1. What are the needs of the employer with regard to response time (time for the rescue service to receive notification, arrive at the scene, and set up and be ready for entry)? For example, if entry is to be made into an IDLH atmosphere, or into a space that can quickly develop an IDLH atmosphere (if ventilation fails or for other reasons), the rescue team or service would need to be standing by at the permit space. On the other hand, if the danger to entrants is restricted to mechanical hazards that would cause injuries (e.g., broken bones, abrasions) a response time of 10 or 15 minutes might be adequate.
  2. How quickly can the rescue team or service get from its location to the permit spaces from which rescue may be necessary? Relevant factors to consider would include: the location of the rescue team or service relative to the employer's workplace, the quality of roads and highways to be traveled, potential bottlenecks or traffic congestion that might be encountered in transit, the reliability of the rescuer's vehicles, and the training and skill of its drivers.
  3. What is the availability of the rescue service? Is it unavailable at certain times of the day or in certain situations? What is the likelihood that key personnel of the rescue service might be unavailable at times?  
If the rescue service becomes unavailable while an entry is underway, does it have the capability of notifying the employer so that the employer can instruct the attendant to abort the entry immediately?
  4. Does the rescue service meet all the requirements of paragraph (k)(2) of the standard? If not, has it developed a plan that will enable it to meet those requirements in the future? If so, how soon can the plan be implemented?
  5. For off-site services, is the service willing to perform rescues at the employer's workplace? (An employer may not rely on a rescuer who declines, for whatever reason, to provide rescue services.)
  6. Is an adequate method for communications between the attendant, employer and prospective rescuer available so that a rescue request can be transmitted to the rescuer without delay? How soon after notification can a prospective rescuer dispatch a rescue team to the entry site?
  7. For rescues into spaces that may pose significant atmospheric hazards and from which rescue entry, patient packaging and retrieval cannot be safely accomplished in a relatively short time (15-20 minutes), employers should consider using airline respirators (with escape bottles) for the rescuers and to supply rescue air to the patient.  
If the employer decides to use SCBA, does the prospective rescue service have an ample supply of replacement cylinders and procedures for rescuers to enter and exit (or be retrieved) well within the SCBA's air supply limits?
  8. If the space has a vertical entry over 5 feet in depth, can the prospective rescue service properly perform entry rescues? Does the service have the technical knowledge and equipment to

perform rope work or elevated rescue, if needed?

9. Does the rescue service have the necessary skills in medical evaluation, patient packaging and emergency response?
  10. Does the rescue service have the necessary equipment to perform rescues, or must the equipment be provided by the employer or another source?
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