

(B) Performance Evaluation

Rescue services are required by paragraph (k)(2)(iv) of the standard to practice rescues at least once every 12 months, provided that the team or service has not successfully performed a permit space rescue within that time.

As part of each practice session, the service should perform a critique of the practice rescue, or have another qualified party perform the critique, so that deficiencies in procedures, equipment, training, or number of personnel can be identified and corrected. The results of the critique, and the corrections made to respond to the deficiencies identified, should be given to the employer to enable it to determine whether the rescue service can quickly be upgraded to meet the employer's rescue needs or whether another service must be selected. The following questions will assist employers and rescue teams and services evaluate their performance.

1. Have all members of the service been trained as permit space entrants, at a minimum, including training in the potential hazards of all permit spaces, or of representative permit spaces, from which rescue may be needed? Can team members recognize the signs, symptoms, and consequences of exposure to any hazardous atmospheres that may be present in those permit spaces?
2. Is every team member provided with, and properly trained in, the use and need for PPE, such as SCBA or fall arrest equipment, which may be required to perform permit space rescues in the facility? Is every team member properly trained to perform his or her functions and make rescues, and to use any rescue equipment, such as ropes and backboards, that may be needed in a rescue attempt?
3. Are team members trained in the first aid and medical skills needed to treat victims overcome or injured by the types of hazards that may be encountered in the permit spaces at the facility?
4. Do all team members perform their functions safely and efficiently? Do rescue service personnel focus on their own safety before considering the safety of the victim?
5. If necessary, can the rescue service properly test the atmosphere to determine if it is IDLH?
6. Can the rescue personnel identify information pertinent to the rescue from entry permits, hot work permits, and MSDSs?
7. Has the rescue service been informed of any hazards to personnel that may arise from outside the space, such as those that may be caused by future work near the space?
8. If necessary, can the rescue service properly package and retrieve victims from a permit space that has a limited size opening (less than 24 inches (60.9 cm) in diameter), limited internal space, or internal obstacles or hazards?
9. If necessary, can the rescue service safely perform an elevated (high angle) rescue?
10. Does the rescue service have a plan for each of the kinds of permit space rescue operations at the facility? Is the plan adequate for all types of rescue operations that may be needed at the facility? Teams may practice in representative spaces, or in spaces that are "worstcase" or most restrictive with respect to internal configuration, elevation, and portal size. The following characteristics of a practice space should be considered when deciding whether a space is truly representative of an actual permit space:
 - (1) **INTERNAL CONFIGURATION.**
 - (a) Open -- there are no obstacles, barriers, or obstructions within the space. One example is a water tank.
 - (b) Obstructed -- the permit space contains some type of obstruction that a rescuer would need to maneuver around. An example would be a baffle or mixing blade. Large equipment, such as a ladder or scaffold, brought into a space for work purposes would be considered an obstruction

if the positioning or size of the equipment would make rescue more difficult.

(2) ELEVATION.

(a) Elevated -- a permit space where the entrance portal or opening is above grade by 4 feet or more. This type of space usually requires knowledge of high angle rescue procedures because of the difficulty in packaging and transporting a patient to the ground from the portal.

(b) Non-elevated -- a permit space with the entrance portal located less than 4 feet above grade. This type of space will allow the rescue team to transport an injured employee normally.

(3) PORTAL SIZE.

(a) Restricted -- A portal of 24 inches or less in the least dimension. Portals of this size are too small to allow a rescuer to simply enter the space while using SCBA. The portal size is also too small to allow normal spinal immobilization of an injured employee.

(b) Unrestricted -- A portal of greater than 24 inches in the least dimension. These portals allow relatively free movement into and out of the permit space.

(4) SPACE ACCESS.

(a) Horizontal -- The portal is located on the side of the permit space. Use of retrieval lines could be difficult.

(b) Vertical -- The portal is located on the top of the permit space, so that rescuers must climb down, or the bottom of the permit space, so that rescuers must climb up to enter the space. Vertical portals may require knowledge of rope techniques, or special patient packaging to safely retrieve a downed entrant.

[63 FR 66039, Dec. 1, 1998]

Notes