

OSHA ALERT

Loss of Start-Up Oxygen in CSE SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuers

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is alerting employers and workers using the CSE Corporation's SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuer (SCSR) to potential failure problems with these respirators.

Some of these devices have a critical defect that may cause insufficient oxygen to be released during start-up and allow individuals using or depending upon the respirator to be exposed to immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) conditions. The use of self-rescuer respirators is required by OSHA's Underground Construction standard (29 CFR 1926.800(g)(2)), and they are also identified as one approach to emergency escape respiratory protection for sewer workers under the Permit-required Confined Spaces standard (29 CFR 1910.146, Appendix E). They may also be found in chemical and pulp/paper plants. Employers should immediately take steps to replace CSE SR-100 respirators with a different National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved self-rescuer or other respirator suitable for emergency escape protection.

The availability of sufficient start-up oxygen is critical to the performance of the SR-100. NIOSH recently issued a technical report (*Loss of Start-Up Oxygen in CSE SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuers*) [DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2012-139] which found that the CSE SR-100 units had an unacceptable defect rate (2% or less), and that they no longer conform to the minimum requirements for certification under 42 CFR Part 84. Accordingly, employers and workers should no longer rely upon this device as an escape respirator during emergencies.

What steps should employers take?

- Under OSHA's Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134) employers must provide each worker with training to ensure that the workers



CSE SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuer opened and unopened.



NIOSH approval label on CSE SR-100.

know what to do should their CSE SR-100 respirators fail to activate.

- Employers should immediately take steps to replace CSE SR-100 respirators with a different NIOSH-approved self-rescuer or other respirator suitable for emergency escape protection.

- CSE SR-100's must be removed from service no later than May 31, 2012, in accordance with the NIOSH Respirator User Notice "Loss of Start-Up Oxygen in CSE SR-100 Self-Contained Self-Rescuers" of April 26, 2012. In the interim, before receiving different NIOSH-approved respirators, employers using CSE SR-100's who can do so should make extra units available to all workers. The extra CSE SR-100 respirators should be immediately available to the workers in case the respirator they are wearing fails to activate.

How can OSHA help employers?

OSHA provides free, On-site Consultation services for small businesses with fewer than 250 workers at a single work site (and no more than 500 employees nationwide). This program provides free on-site compliance assistance to help employers identify and correct job hazards as well as improve injury and illness prevention programs. On-site Consultation services are separate from enforcement and do not result in penalties or citations. To find the local On-site Consultation office nearest you, visit OSHA's website or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

OSHA also has compliance assistance specialists throughout the nation who can provide general information about OSHA standards and compliance assistance resources. Contact your local OSHA office for more information at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742) or visit OSHA's website.

What rights do workers have?

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.
- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary they understand) about hazards, methods to prevent harm, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- Get copies of test results that find and measure hazards.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. When requested, OSHA will keep all identities confidential.
- Exercise their rights under the Occupational Safety and Health Act without retaliation or discrimination.

For questions or to get information or advice, to report an emergency, a fatality or catastrophe, to order publications or to file a confidential complaint, contact your nearest OSHA office, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.

Disclaimer

This OSHA Alert is not a standard or regulation, and it creates no new legal obligations. It contains recommendations as well as descriptions of mandatory safety and health standards [and other regulatory requirements]. The recommendations are advisory in nature, informational in content, and are intended to assist employers in providing a safe and healthful workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Act requires employers to comply with safety and health standards and regulations promulgated by OSHA or by a state with an OSHA-approved state plan. In addition, the Act's General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), requires employers to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.



U.S. Department of Labor
Hilda L. Solis, Secretary of Labor



**Occupational Safety
and Health Administration**

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