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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

DIVING SAFETY MANUAL
(Revision 1.2)

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Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division

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Jed Campbell	Van Kozak
Marty Chintala	TChris MochonCollura
Gary Collins	Eric P. Nelson
Steve Donohue	Mel Parsons
Bruce Franklin	Rob Pedersen
Jim Gouvas	Kennard Potts
Alan Humphrey	Sean Sheldrake

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The contents of this manual reflect the views of EPA's Diving Safety Board in presenting the standards of their operations.

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APPENDICES

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAUS	American Academy of Underwater Sciences
AGE	arterial gas embolism (aka CAGE)
BCD	Buoyancy Control Device
CAGE	cerebral arterial gas embolism (aka AGE)
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPR	cardio pulmonary resuscitation
DAN	Divers Alert Network
DCI	decompression illness (includes both DCS and AGE)
DCS	decompression sickness
DMS	Diving Medical Specialist
DSB	Diving Safety Board
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FSW	feet seawater
IDEA	International Diving Educators Association
MOA	memorandum of agreement
NASDS	National Association of Scuba Diving Schools
NAUI	National Association of Underwater Instructors
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OA	Office of Administration
OSC	On-Scene Coordinator
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Department of Labor)
PADI	Professional Association of Diving Instructors
ROV	remotely operated vehicle
RPM	Remedial Project Manager
scuba	self-contained underwater breathing apparatus
SEE	Senior Environmental Employee
SHEMD	Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division
SHEMP	Safety, Health and Environmental Management Program
SOP	standard operating procedure
SM	standard method
SSI	Scuba Schools International
UDO	Unit Diving Officer
UMHS	Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society
VHF	very high frequency
VIP	visual inspection process
VVDS	variable volume dry suit
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association, scuba training program

1.0 DIVE PROGRAM POLICY

1.1 Purpose

This policy section prescribes the administration and safety rules for the EPA Underwater/Diving Safety Program. *Federal law requires that individual underwater activities (diving) conducted in performance of any employment condition must conform with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations 29 CFR Part 1910 — OSH Standards; Subpart T — Commercial Diving Operations. EPA has opted, as the basis for its policy, to conduct its diving operation in accordance with the scientific diving exemption as codified in that document.*

This directive sets forth EPA's policy for minimizing its worker's occupational hazards to the underwater environment. Divers must be aware of the additional specific underwater-related hazards such as drowning, near-drowning and the hyperbaric illnesses, which include nitrogen narcosis, decompression sickness (DCS), arterial gas embolism (AGE), oxygen toxicity and other ancillary health and safety issues.

The program's objectives include compliance with applicable federal, state, and local governmental laws, regulations, guidelines, and executive orders; incorporation of appropriate elements of nationally recognized consensus standards; and effective use of the wide range of both internal and external resources and expertise available to EPA.

Standard operating procedures (SOPs), maintained under this program in other documents, establish the general approaches and work practices that are implemented at the operations level to achieve the various requirements of the program in laboratory, field, and other settings.

Standard methods (SMs), maintained under the SOPs in separate documents, detail the specific procedures and techniques that are employed in the conduct of certain work activities.

The program and its associated SOPs and SMs incorporate nationally accepted and consistent means and methods for planning and conducting underwater and diving activities to minimize the potential hazards associated with these activities. To efficiently manage the EPA Diving Safety Program, the Diving Safety Board (DSB) will create, revise, and delete SOPs and SMs using this document, the program's *Diving Safety Manual*. The manual is considered separable from the Directorate's Policy and Program document and is outside of the revision process for that document. SOPs and SMs will be reviewed at the DSB annual meeting, and SHEMD will be informed of the board's action in the annual report of the meeting. Lists of the current SOPs and SMs are contained in Appendix K.

1.2 Background

The EPA Underwater/Diving Safety Program and its associated SOPs/SMs address various aspects of Agency workers' protection from job-related hazards such as might typically be found at land-based EPA work sites as well as those specific to the underwater environment (such as immersion in chemically and/or biologically contaminated waters) and hyperbaric induced illnesses (such as DCS or AGE) in accordance with the Diving Safety Manual. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (see Appendix N) provides for management of the program by the Office of Administration (OA) and daily administration by the Chairperson of the DSB. The MOA affirms the authority of SHEMD for overall program administration and formalizes the relationship between the DSB and SHEMD, whereby SHEMD has program policy authority and the DSB provides program technical assistance and support, but retains some independence to ensure that administrative or technical demands do not unduly influence or require field personnel to perform operations with unreasonable risk.

1.3 Policy

As with any employer, it is the Agency's responsibility to limit its workers' exposure of occupational hazards with reasonable risk. This document focuses attention to the risk of injury or to health in diving and other underwater hazards to fall within the limits prescribed by underwater diving certifying entities for no-decompression diving. It is the policy of the Agency to maintain adequate protection for its employees, property and those for whom it has a responsibility, and to limit occupational exposure to diving-related injuries and other underwater hazards.

The Agency maintains a program that establishes the organizational structure, managerial functions, technical framework, safe dive limits system, and other elements through which this policy is effected. SOPs and SMs promulgated under this section establish general approaches and work practices, as well as specific procedures and techniques, to achieve program requirements in all operational settings. It must be explicitly stated here that this document is the policy by which EPA employees conduct all diving operations. These operations must fall within the limits prescribed by underwater certifying entities (e.g., EPA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA], U.S. Navy, American Academy of Underwater Sciences [AAUS]). By issuing this *Diving Safety Manual*, the DSB reserves the need and right to maintain a set of operating rules, guidelines, procedures and methods as provided in the appendices of this manual. As required by OSHA under the rules for "Scientific Diving," this manual is maintained by the DSB for autonomous guidance of its operations.

1.4 Scope

This manual and the parent Policy and Program document apply to all EPA employees engaged in underwater activities using compressed gas (e.g., air) as the breathing medium in the self-contained or surface-supplied mode and shall be administered following the guidance of EPA's basic policies. This document is the policy by which EPA employees* conduct diving operations. The term "employees" includes full-time, part-time, temporary, and permanent EPA employees; enrollees in EPA's Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) Program; EPA stay-in-school program participants; interns and fellows assigned to EPA; and others designated on a case-by-case basis by the Director of SHEMD. In addition, the Policy and Program requires that contractors and other organizations conducting diving operations at EPA-controlled sites or conducting dives under EPA supervision do so in accordance with EPA policy.

1.4.1 Federal Regulations. The directives set forth here and in the parent document to this manual, (i.e., Policy and Program) are not intended to apply to other federal, state or local governmental agencies or contractor personnel. However, the employees or agents of such agencies, when performing duties at EPA facilities or at EPA-controlled sites working as members of an EPA dive unit, are required to comply with:

- The more conservative of the employee's organization dive regulations or the EPA Diving Safety Policy and Program.
- Other sections of the program as directed by the Unit Diving Officer (UDO) or local SHEMP Manager.
- Submission of the dive plan and scope of work, approved by the employee's office, to the office of EPA that hired the employee (the local UDO may review the dive plan if requested).

* Or contractors, who are at a minimum EPA-certified Scientific Divers, who routinely participate as members of an EPA dive unit, and whose activities fall clearly under the data gathering criterion of the OSHA scientific diving exemption (see Subsection 1.4.2, "Scientific Diving Requirements/Prohibitions"), shall conduct their dives in accordance with this manual. Contractors whose work is clearly of a commercial nature (e.g., drum search and recovery) shall conduct their dives in accordance with the OSHA Commercial Diving Standard. In any case, the Agency has the responsibility for imposing and enforcing appropriate safety standards for *all* personnel at a multi-employer work site under its control, such as a Superfund remediation site.

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Employees or agents of other government agencies conducting diving operations with EPA, unless covered under a specific reciprocity agreement between that agency and EPA, must follow the policy and procedures required by their own organization. The employees of contractors, grantees and other organizations having agreements with EPA are required to comply with OSHA regulations for commercial diving or with the scientific diving exemption (provided below) under the auspices of their own organization. The diver's direct employer is required by OSHA to have a written program ensuring compliance under either qualification.

Contractors, grantees and organizations with which EPA has agreements other than by reciprocating must comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations pertaining to underwater diving unless otherwise covered under this manual. Among other requirements are those mandated in the sections below. Two principal federal agencies regulate and govern diving operations: OSHA and the U.S. Coast Guard, as indicated below:

- * Title 29 — Labor; Subtitle B; Chapter XVII — OSHA; Part 1910 — OSH Standards; Subpart T — Commercial Diving Operations and Appendix B to Subpart T — Guidelines for Scientific Diving.
- * Title 46 — Shipping; Chapter I; U.S. Coast Guard; Subchapter V — Marine OSH Standards; Part 197; Subpart B — Commercial Diving Operations.

1.4.2 Scientific Diving Requirements/Prohibitions. Both federal regulations have exemptions for diving operations conducted solely for scientific purposes. The standards indicated below allow diving for observation or research and exclude any operation that might require strenuous activity or activities usually associated with commercial diving operations.

29 CFR Part 1910 exempts scientific diving under the following conditions:

§ 1910.401 Scope and Application.

(a) ...

(2) ... *However, this standard does not apply to any diving operation: ...*

(iv) *Defined as scientific diving and which is under the direction and control of a diving program containing at least the following elements:*

(A) *Diving safety manual which includes at a minimum: procedures covering all diving operations specific to the program; procedures for emergency care, including recompression and evacuation; and criteria for diver training and certification.*

(B) *Diving control (safety) board, with the majority of its members being active divers, which shall at a minimum have the authority to: approve and monitor diving projects; review and revise the diving safety manual; assure compliance with the manual; certify the depths to which a diver has been trained; take disciplinary action for unsafe*

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practices; and, assure adherence to the buddy system (a diver is accompanied by and is in continuous contact with another diver in the water) for scuba diving. ...

§ 1910.402 Definitions. ...

“Scientific diving” means diving performed solely as a part of a scientific, research, or educational activity by employees whose sole purpose for diving is to perform scientific research tasks. Scientific diving does not include performing any tasks usually associated with commercial diving such as: placing or removing heavy objects underwater; inspection of pipelines and similar objects; construction; demolition; cutting or welding; or the use of explosives. ... Appendix B to Subpart T — Guidelines for Scientific Diving

This appendix contains guidelines that will be used in conjunction with §1910.401(a)(2)(iv) to determine those scientific diving programs which are exempt from the requirements for commercial diving. The guidelines are as follows:

- 1. The Diving Control Board consists of a majority of active divers and has autonomous and absolute authority over the scientific diving program’s operation.*
- 2. The purpose of the project using scientific diving is the advancement of science; therefore, information and data resulting from the project are nonproprietary.*
- 3. The tasks of a scientific diver are those of an observer and data gatherer. Construction and trouble-shooting tasks traditionally associated with commercial diving are not included within scientific diving.*
- 4. Scientific divers, based on the nature of their activities, must use scientific expertise in studying the underwater environment and, therefore, are scientists or scientists in training.*

2.0 DIVE PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

2.1 Diving Safety Board (DSB)

2.1.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The EPA DSB shall be composed of the UDOs from each diving unit and the DSB Chairman as voting members, and a representative from SHEMD as an ex-officio member.
- b. Non-voting consultants, where necessary, may be invited to provide essential expertise on matters relating to the EPA Diving Program.
- c. All recommendations for revisions of the policy, diving rules or other requirements associated with this program must be agreed upon by consensus of the DSB voting members.
- d. The dealings and recommendations of the DSB may be represented by its officers (i.e., Chairperson, Training Director and Technical Director) with concurrence of the majority of the DSB.
- e. As determined by the DSB Chairperson, all voting members of the DSB will be polled if the business at hand can be delayed and the absent vote(s) would determine the decision.

2.1.2 Responsibilities

The DSB shall make recommendations and be responsible for:

- a. Meeting annually at a time and place to be designated by the DSB Chairperson.
- b. Recommending policy and changes in operating procedures within EPA that will ensure a safe and efficient diving program.
- c. Reviewing existing policies, procedures and training needs to ensure a continually high level of technical skills and knowledge throughout the EPA Diving Program.
- d. Planning, programming and directing policy pertaining to the initial certification of new divers and refresher training of experienced divers in cooperation with the EPA Diving Program's Technical and Training Directors.
- e. Recommending changes in operating policy to SHEMD through the DSB Chairperson.

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- f. Serving as an appeals board in cases where a diver's certification has been suspended.
- g. Planning, programming, and directing diver workshops, seminars, and other activities considered essential to maintaining a high level of competency among divers.
- h. Reviewing EPA diving accidents or potentially dangerous incidents and reporting on preventive measures to ensure safe diving.
- i. Reviewing all budgeted advanced diving projects or directing the DSB Chairperson to establish and chair an approved review committee for such projects.
- j. Advising SHEMD directly of any policies, procedures or actions that affect the safety or efficiency of EPA diving activities.
- k. Reviewing EPA contracts and cooperative agreements that involve diving, as necessary.
- l. Reviewing diving reciprocity agreements, and when necessary, dive plans for non-EPA divers when funded and supervised by EPA.
- m. Submitting comments on these activities to SHEMD.

2.2 DSB Chairperson

2.2.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The DSB Chairperson shall be the principal contact within EPA for diving operational policy and safety procedures.
- b. The DSB Chairperson shall be a diver with a wide range of experience and be:
 - i. A currently certified EPA Divemaster.
 - ii. Capable of carrying out the responsibilities listed below.
- c. The DSB Chairperson will be elected by simple majority from among the DSB members to serve a term of three years.

2.2.2 Responsibilities

The DSB Chairperson shall make recommendations to allocate sufficient resources to provide technical assistance and support to SHEMD, regions, laboratories and other operating units to ensure implementation, management and maintenance of program policies, standards, protocols, priorities and evaluation

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activities in accordance with the MOA between SHEMD and the DSB and the statutes, regulations and guidelines identified below. The DSB Chairperson, nominated from the DSB membership and confirmed by SHEMD, shall be responsible for:

- a. Conducting an annual meeting of the DSB.
- b. Conducting an annual review with the EPA DSB of all EPA diving operations during the preceding calendar year and submitting an annual report at the end of the calendar year to SHEMD and a quarterly report, as may be requested by SHEMD for Division reporting purposes.
- c. Establishing procedures for the UDOs and the EPA DSB Technical Director to conduct safety inspections of each diving unit on an annual basis.
- d. Ensuring that such inspections of each diving unit are accomplished.
- e. Reviewing all budgeted diving projects.
- f. Reviewing and taking appropriate action on recommendations for changes in operating policy formulated by the EPA DSB and/or SHEMD.
- g. Leading a review of all EPA diving accidents or potentially dangerous incidents and issuing reports on preventive measures to ensure safe diving.
- h. Approving the use of specialized types of diving apparatus or gas mixtures, other than open circuit self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (scuba) with air or oxygen-enriched air after consultation with the appropriate technical experts.
- i. Developing diving reciprocity agreements between EPA and other federal and state agencies, colleges/universities, private institutions, or any other entity.
- j. Remaining abreast of new diving techniques and innovations.
- k. Establishing and chairing such budgeted advanced diving project review committees as may be directed and approved by SHEMD.

2.3 DSB Technical Director

2.3.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The DSB shall appoint an EPA Technical Director who will be the principal contact with the DSB Chairperson for safety, equipment and technical matters.

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- b. The DSB Technical Director shall be a currently certified EPA Divemaster capable of carrying out the responsibilities listed below. This requires the Technical Director to remain current in the knowledge and understanding of industry standards, practices and concerns; diving medicine to the extent necessary to provide guidance on safe diving practices; and diving technology (e.g., by attending the annual diving technology show or other technical meetings).
- c. The DSB Technical Director will be elected by a simple majority from among the DSB members to serve a term of three years.

2.3.2 Responsibilities

The Technical Director shall be responsible to the DSB Chairperson for:

- a. Preparing reports of diving unit safety inspections as designated by the DSB Chairperson or as requested by the UDOs.
- b. Managing the breathing gas quality assurance program (i.e., compressor system recordkeeping and routine analyses) (see breathing gas standards in Appendix A, EPA Diving Safety Rules, No. 22).
- c. Coordinating diving accident reporting with appropriate EPA Safety Managers.
- d. Reviewing new technologies that may be incorporated into the EPA Diving Program.
- e. Working with the DSB Chairperson in reviewing all EPA diving accidents or potentially dangerous incidents and issuing reports on preventive measures to ensure safe diving.
- f. Approving the use of specialized types of diving apparatus or gas mixtures, other than open circuit scuba with air or oxygen-enriched air after consultation with the appropriate technical specialists.
- g. Actively researching new diving equipment, techniques and innovations.

2.4 **DSB Training Director**

2.4.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The DSB shall appoint an EPA Training Director from its membership who will be the principal contact with the DSB Chairperson for training, certification and diver qualification. In addition, the Training Director will be an additional resource on issues of safety, equipment, and technical diving matters.

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- b. The Training Director shall be a currently certified EPA Divemaster capable of carrying out the responsibilities listed below. The Training Director shall be experienced in the areas of instruction, as required by the duties involved in the EPA Diving Program and/or as recommended by the DSB. The Training Director shall be capable of coordinating the training activities for the diver qualification, certification and safety training programs.
- c. The DSB Training Director will be elected by simple majority from the DSB membership to serve an indefinite term.

2.4.2 Responsibilities

The Training Director shall be responsible to the Chairperson of the DSB for:

- a. Providing and coordinating all EPA Scientific Diver and Divemaster Training Courses for EPA employees, certifying individuals to the EPA Scientific Diver and Divemaster levels, maintaining training records, and issuing Letters of Certification (Appendix F) in accordance with this manual.
- b. Managing these courses with the advice and assistance of the EPA DSB by discussing possible private (contract) sources of trainers and by delegating various training course responsibilities to the EPA UDOs whom are able to participate in the course.
- c. Coordinating contracting activities with SHEMD for the purpose of providing appropriate trainers for these courses.
- d. Remaining abreast of new diving equipment, techniques and innovations.
- e. Approving and providing training opportunities for the use of specialized types of diving apparatus or gas mixtures, other than open circuit scuba with air or oxygen-enriched air after consultation with the appropriate technical specialists.
- f. Providing a written summary of training activities to the DSB Chairperson 30 days prior to the DSB's annual meeting for inclusion in the DSB's annual report to SHEMD.

2.5. **DSB Special Operations Director**

2.5.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The DSB shall elect a Special Operations Director from its membership, who will be the principal contact with the DSB Chairperson related to special nonroutine technical issues or dive support that may be associated with significant national events.

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- b. The Special Operations Director and DSB Chairperson shall be the lead contacts within the EPA Dive Program for major homeland security or hazardous materials incidents, national disaster response, and coordination of EPA Dive Unit response actions during significant national events.
- c. The DSB Special Operations Director shall be a currently certified EPA Divemaster capable of carrying out the responsibilities listed below. The Special Operations Director should be experienced in:
 - i. Emergency response to oil/chemical spills or terrorist threats.
 - ii. Contaminated water diving procedures and equipment.
 - iii. Providing EPA technical support during hazardous material incidents.
 - iv. Coordination with local, state and federal agencies.
- d. The DSB Special Operations Director will be elected by simple majority from the DSB membership to serve a five-year term.
- e. If EPA personnel are requested to dive on a special mission, and the proposed activity falls outside of the scope of routine scientific diving, the DSB Chairperson and Special Operations Director will identify and brief key Agency personnel on the nature of the operation prior to committing Agency resources.

2.5.2 Responsibilities

The Special Operations Director shall be responsible to the DSB Chairperson for:

- a. As requested, coordinating EPA diving projects with On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) and Remedial Project Managers (RPMs) at Superfund sites or spills of oil or hazardous substances.
- b. Providing technical support or diving capability at national or significant events that involve homeland security, waterborne terrorist threats, major oil or chemical spills to water, or other situations warranting the use of EPA divers.
- c. Coordinating EPA diving resources at a significant national event. The Special Operations Director will assess the situation and work in consultation with the DSB Chairperson. Based on the hazards involved, the Director and Chairperson will consult with UDOs and select the most qualified divers.

2.6 **Unit Diving Officer (UDO)**

2.6.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The UDO must be capable of managing the unit's diving assignments, personnel and equipment resources along with the reporting functions

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indicated in this policy section. The Director of each region, Headquarters office, or laboratory, as appropriate, that conducts diving operations shall recommend to the EPA DSB Chairperson a UDO for appointment. The UDO candidate nomination shall be made in consultation with and approved by members of the DSB, who may have a better understanding of a candidate's capabilities to meet the functional requirements.

- b. The UDO shall be a currently certified EPA Divemaster capable of carrying out the responsibilities listed below. This requires the UDO to be knowledgeable of industry standards, practices and concerns; diving medicine to the extent necessary to provide guidance on safe diving practices; and diving technology.
- c. The UDO is responsible for annually reporting to the DSB a summary of all diving activities, accidents, incidents and other information as requested by the DSB Chairperson.

2.6.2 Responsibilities

The UDOs shall compose EPA's DSB, representing the regional, Headquarters offices, and laboratories, and shall be responsible within the unit for:

- a. Reviewing and acting on (i.e., approve or request amendment to) requests for dive plan approval.
- b. Reviewing and maintaining copies of all dive training and qualification records for all EPA-certified divers within their unit.
- c. Maintaining current generic diving safety policies, plans and procedures.
- d. Providing technical support locally in the development of site safety plans.
- e. Providing managerial and technical resources for diving programs to the unit managers and supervisors.
- f. Providing, if possible, onsite logistical and supervisory support to the EPA Training Director for diver training courses.
- g. Conducting investigations of occurrences, accidents and employee incidences of diving-related illnesses and/or excursions in concert with the SHEMP Manager.
- h. Planning, programming, directing and reviewing the diving activities within the unit to ensure compliance with EPA policies, procedures and standards relating to diving operations.
- i. Maintaining familiarity with all diving activities within the unit.
- j. Locally conducting and documenting annual onsite diving unit inspections

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or appointing qualified designees to conduct such inspections and forwarding a report of such inspections to the DSB Chairperson and the EPA Diving Program Technical Director in a timely manner.

- k. Recommending divers for advancement in the EPA Diver Training Program.
- l. Advising and assisting the Training Director in planning and coordinating diver training programs leading to certification of divers to meet the various research and technical diving requirements of EPA.
- m. Establishing requalification criteria within the unit for divers whose proficiency requirements have lapsed.
- n. Investigating and reporting each diving accident/incident that occurs within the unit, in conformance with Section 3.0, Dive Program Elements, Subsection 3.1.8, “Reporting, Investigating and Reviewing Diving Accidents.”
- o. Submitting an annual report of all diving activities and accidents, as required, to the DSB Chairperson.
- p. Ensuring that all diving gear and accessory equipment is maintained in a safe operating condition.
- q. Ensuring the maintenance of equipment files at the unit and the ship/work party levels to include type, brand name, serial number and repairs completed on compressors, tanks, regulators, depth gauges, pressure gauges and decompression meters and/or dive computers.
- r. Ensuring that a competent Divemaster is in charge of the diving operations conducted by the unit’s various ships and work parties.
- s. Maintaining a file on each diver in their unit or delegating this responsibility to the ship/work party Divemasters. The file maintained on each diver shall include, but not be limited to: a copy of the diver’s most recent Medical Qualification Form (see Appendix D, last page); a copy of the diver’s Letter of Certification; copies of the diver’s training records; and copies of the individual’s dive log sheets. (*Note:* The individual diver should be responsible for maintaining a copy of his/her own completed Medical Evaluation Form, as submitted for diver qualification.)

2.7 Alternate UDO

2.7.1 Policies/Procedures

An Alternate UDO will be designated at the discretion of the UDO by internal memorandum to the Office Director (or equivalent level), the DSB Chairperson,

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and the UDO's appropriate supervisor, to temporarily assume the duties of the UDO in his/her absence. The primary responsibility is to provide coverage for administrative responsibilities in the UDO's absence.

2.7.2 Responsibilities

(see UDO Responsibilities above)

2.8 **Divemaster**

2.8.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The Divemaster designation is an assigned function for each diving project, similar to a site supervisor. Depending on the unit organization, a Divemaster shall be assigned for each ship/work party by the UDO for all diving operations. In the UDO's or Alternate UDO's absence, the EPA DSB Chair, Technical Director or Training Director may assign the Divemaster.
- b. The project Divemaster shall be a currently certified EPA diver experienced in that specific type of diving and must have successfully completed the EPA or NOAA Divemaster Training Course.
- c. The Divemaster or UDO may designate an Acting Divemaster who may not have received the EPA or NOAA Divemaster Training Course. The Acting Divemaster should be a fully qualified Scientific Diver experienced with the type of dive operation being conducted.

2.8.2 Responsibilities

Designated Divemasters are responsible for:

- a. Supervising employees and divers, as appropriate, and in a manner so as to ensure that their health is protected through the application of this program and all related guidance and directives.
- b. Through observation of divers' performance in the field, identifying those who may be eligible for enrollment, advancement or discharge from the program.
- c. If requested by the UDO, overseeing the proper handling and use and timely replacement of critical diving equipment.
- d. Jointly reviewing diving-related incidences involving their subordinates in consultation with the SHEMP Manager and UDO.
- e. Being aware of their divers and other workers who are diving profiles that approach the no-decompression limits (or oxygen toxicity limits for Nitrox

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or mixed-gas profiles) and monitoring those individuals for neurological or toxic effects.

The Divemaster, or their designee, shall be in complete charge of all diving operations conducted by the ship/work party and shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- i. All diving operations are conducted safely in accordance with prescribed EPA diving safety rules and regulations.
- ii. All divers are certified, properly trained and physically fit to perform the required diving and that the prescribed files are maintained if responsibility has been delegated by the UDO.
- iii. All equipment is in a safe operating condition and that the required maintenance records are maintained as directed by the UDO.
- iv. Emergency procedures are understood by all personnel before diving.
- v. An accurate log of all diving activities is maintained (e.g., times in/out of water, tank pressures) as required in Section 3.0, Dive Program Elements, Subsection 3.1.7, “Diving Plans, Reports and Logs.”
- vi. All divers are monitored after each dive for symptoms of decompression illness (e.g., DCS or AGE).
- vii. Reporting immediately all diving-related accidents/incidents within their unit in conformance with Section 3.0, Dive Program Elements, Subsection 3.1.8, “Reporting, Investigating and Reviewing Diving Accidents.”

2.9 Diving Safety Supervisor

On hazardous waste sites, OSCs or RPMs are ultimately responsible for the health and safety of all site workers. In diving operations, the designated EPA Diving Safety Supervisor, as the Divemaster, is immediately responsible for the health and safety of divers under his/her control. The EPA Divemaster should make recommendations to the OSC and/or RPM for commercial diving subcontractors. Because of the shared responsibilities, both parties shall ensure implementation of this program and all related guidance and directives at reporting units, establishments or workplaces.

2.9.1 Designation

A Diving Safety Supervisor will be approved by the EPA DSB with written concurrence of the regional or laboratory office in which the candidate is located.

2.9.2 Qualifications

The Diving Safety Supervisor shall:

- a. Be a currently certified EPA Divemaster.
- b. Complete 40 hours of Hazardous Response Training.

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- c. Be knowledgeable of all regulations (e.g., EPA, OSHA, AAUS) affecting the diving operations.
- d. Have at least three years of experience with the EPA Diving Program.
- e. Have at least five years of experience in the physical or life sciences.

2.9.3 Responsibilities

The Diving Safety Supervisor shall be responsible for:

- a. Ensuring that all diving operations are conducted in compliance with the EPA Diving Safety Policy.
- b. Ensuring that all diving operations are conducted in accordance with OSHA requirements.
- c. Protecting the Agency's interest in the project and adhering to all applicable criteria for sample collection and recordkeeping (including chain-of-custody).
- d. Remaining abreast of new field techniques, procedures, equipment and regulations.

2.10 Individual Diver (Scientific and Trainee)

2.10.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. Individual divers shall be certified by the EPA DSB Training Director and the DSB Chairperson in accordance with the provisions of Section 4.0, Diver Training and Certification, Subsection 4.4, "EPA Diver Certification."
- b. Divers shall be sufficiently trained to undertake the assigned diving tasks.

2.10.2 Responsibilities

The individual divers (including the Dive Tender, as the specific dive plan requires) are responsible for:

- a. Complying with the requirements established by this program and following all directives, SOPs, SMs and related guidance in the performance of their work.
- b. Adhering to dive safe practices in all underwater work-related activities.
- c. The proper handling, use and timely replacement of critical diving apparatus and breathing gases.

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- d. Maintaining good personal physical condition and a high level of diving proficiency.
- e. Maintaining all personal dive equipment in safe operating condition.
- f. Ensuring diving conditions are safe.
- g. Not violating the dictates of training or diving regulations.
- h. Maintaining a current individual dive log of all EPA-related dives, including training and proficiency dives.
- i. Maintaining current cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), oxygen administration and first aid certifications.

2.10.3 Refusal to Dive (All Levels)

Each diver has the responsibility and right to refuse to dive in any of the following cases:

- a. If diving conditions are unsafe or unfavorable.
- b. If at any specific time the diver feels that he/she is not in good physical or mental condition for diving.
- c. If, by diving, the diver would violate the dictates of training or applicable regulations. The conditions and reasons for refusing to dive may be required to be documented. If requested, the incident will be reviewed by the UDO, and appropriate action may be taken. Any action resulting from this review may be appealed to the EPA DSB.

2.11 **Dive Tender**

2.11.1 Policies/Procedures

A Dive Tender, designated by the Divemaster or UDO, shall accompany all EPA-sanctioned dive operations. Except for low-risk dive operations, the Dive Tender shall be a fully qualified Scientific Diver having knowledge and experience with the dive operation. For low-risk dives, the Dive Tender may be a nondiver, but must be currently certified in CPR and first aid and be familiar with dive operations.

2.11.2 Responsibilities

The Dive Tender is responsible for:

- a. Assisting in dressing the divers.
- b. Assisting in tracking each diver's location in the water.

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- c. Recording each diver's tank pressure before and after each dive, their bottom time, and maximum water depth.
- d. Alerting divers, when necessary, on the status of their bottom time via the Diver Recall Unit.
- e. Advising other vessels of the diving operation and warning off boat traffic that might pose a hazard to the divers.
- f. Assisting the divers in exiting the water and doffing their equipment.

2.12 EPA Diving Medicine Specialist

2.12.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The SHEMD Operations Branch Chief will be responsible for appointing the Diving Medical Specialist (DMS). Nominations may be considered from both the DSB and SHEMD. Upon the advice of the EPA DSB Chairperson, the EPA DMS must perform or fulfill the following roles:
 - i. Be a qualified hyperbaric/diving medicine physician.
 - ii. Serve as a consultant to provide essential expertise on matters relating to the medical qualifications of divers.
- b. The EPA DMS will receive overall policy guidance, except for medical policy, from SHEMD, and shall make recommendations to the EPA DSB or to its Chairperson, as appropriate.
- c. The credentials of the DMS must include:
 - i. Certification as a physician (M.D.) licensed to practice medicine in the United States of America.
 - ii. Board Certification in an established primary care specialty such as Internal Medicine, Family Practice, or Emergency Medicine.
 - iii. Qualification as a hyperbaric/diving medicine physician, as evidenced by specific certification as a Navy Diving Medical Officer licensed in hyperbaric medicine, or holding a certificate of additional qualification for hyperbaric/diving medicine (Board of Preventative Medicine, Division of Occupational Medicine) and attending courses and seminars, for continuing education, in hyperbaric/diving medicine accredited by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UMHS).
 - iv. Certification as a diver by a recognized training organization such as the U.S. Navy. Additional training in scientific diving is recommended through such agencies as NOAA or EPA.

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- d. The DMS will be provided by agreement (i.e., contract or memorandum of understanding through another department of the government) to be available for consultation to the DSB and/or SHEMD.

2.12.2 Responsibilities

An EPA DMS, appointed by (and/or under contract to) SHEMD, shall be responsible for:

- a. Providing medical input for policies, procedures (e.g., medical evaluation criteria), and other issues that relate to the safety and health matters of divers.
- b. Serving as a professional liaison with EPA contractors providing routine medical examinations on EPA divers.
- c. Reviewing all physical examinations, making final determinations regarding the ability of divers to perform their diving-related duties, and submitting these determinations, using the EPA Medical Evaluation Form for Divers (Appendix D, last page), to the respective UDOs as well as the DSB Chairperson.
- d. Reviewing or performing special consultations, disability evaluations, independent medical evaluations, and other activities and rendering an expert opinion concerning the fitness of divers.
- e. Reviewing medical records pertinent to any diving-related medical emergency, incident or fatality.
- f. Managing a database that includes medical data and reporting at least annually to SHEMD and the DSB concerning the analysis of this data.
- g. Responding to specific medical inquiries from SHEMD or the DSB.
- h. Recommending changes in the medical criteria for divers.
- i. Recommending changes in the medical examination process or forms for EPA divers.
- j. Making recommendations to further ensure the safety of EPA diving operations.
- k. Reviewing the appeals of individual divers who have been disqualified, permanently or temporarily, due to their medical qualifications.
- l. Summarizing and reviewing results of the annual medical examinations and providing recommendations to the DSB based on the analysis.

2.13 SHEMD Representative

2.13.1 Policies/Procedures

- a. The Director of SHEMD will be responsible for appointing the SHEMD Representative. Nominations may be considered from both the DSB and SHEMD.
- b. Upon advice of the EPA DSB Chairperson, the SHEMD Representative is requested to perform or fulfill the following roles:
 - i. Attend DSB meetings as an ex-officio member.
 - ii. Act as a liaison to SHEMD for the DSB to:
 - (a) Voice SHEMD issues to the DSB
 - (b) Voice DSB issues to SHEMD
 - iii. Assist with preparation and presentation of Diving Safety Program budget issues to SHEMD.
 - iv. Act as the advocate for the Diving Safety Program at SHEMD.
 - v. Act as the lead for independent audits of the Diving Safety Program.
- c. The SHEMD Representative will ensure a valid MOA is in effect providing autonomy of the DSB, as required by OSHA under the Scientific Diving Exemption (29 CFR Part 1910.401).

2.13.2 Responsibilities

The SHEMD Representative shall make recommendations and be responsible for:

- a. Attending annual DSB meetings.
- b. Assisting with annual budget funding requests to various Program Managers who use the Diving Program's services.
- c. Maintaining Headquarters records of the Diving Safety Program including:
 - i. DSB Annual Reports
 - ii. Audit Reports

3.0 DIVE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

3.1 General Operations

3.1.1 Project Review

Proposed diving projects involving systems or modes other than open-circuit scuba, and not addressed elsewhere in this manual, must receive the approval of the EPA DSB, or its designee, before proposed diving activities can begin. The EPA DSB, or its designee, in reviewing and considering operational and safety-related aspects of the project, shall review and consider:

- a. Diver qualifications, certification and physical condition.
- b. The availability of equipment and personnel required to complete the project.
- c. Specific SOPs regarding safety, methodology and emergency procedures.
- d. Support staffing.

In the case of long-term programs other than standard scuba not covered elsewhere in these regulations, an EPA DSB review shall be conducted annually or when major personnel or diving system changes occur.

3.1.2 Scuba Diving Teams

Except under emergency conditions and/or using the Tethered Diving SOP (Appendix P), the buddy system of at least two divers shall always be required. When conditions are such that the probability of diver separation is high, such as with low visibility, some form of direct contact, physical or visual, between divers shall be maintained. At all times, divers (especially Trainee Divers) shall be in physical, visual or auditory contact with other qualified members of the dive team so that assistance can be easily rendered in the event trouble occurs (e.g., entanglement, out-of-air emergency). In the event that diving is shallow within a restricted area, and as water conditions allow, the buddy diver may remain at the surface fully equipped while maintaining contact (e.g., line tending, visual or underwater communication audio) with the Scientific Diver at all times.

A Dive Tender shall always be present to assist divers in and out of the water. Depending on conditions, and at the Divemaster's discretion, a fully suited, equipment-ready standby diver might also be required.

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3.1.3 Diver Proficiency

EPA-certified divers should log an average of two dives per month. Any time six weeks or more elapse without a dive, the diver should complete a requalifying program. Any time three months or more elapse without a dive, the diver **must** complete a requalifying program before resuming work dives (as specified by the UDO). This requirement may be waived by the UDO only during emergency conditions. A report of such waiver must be submitted to the DSB Chairperson by the UDO for review by the EPA DSB. Supervisors shall authorize the necessary time and payment for qualifying dives if diving is required for official program activities.

3.1.4 Equipment Availability

Diving equipment shall be made available during non-duty hours for purposes of maintaining diver proficiency.

3.1.5 Diving by Non-EPA-Certified Personnel (also see Subsection 3.8.2, “Planned Deviations – Diving by Non-EPA Divers as Observers”)

Persons not included in a reciprocity agreement must submit, in advance, evidence of diving training and full medical qualifications, as described in Tab IV, Diver Training and Certification, Section C, “Physical Examinations,” to the UDO, or their designee, who will evaluate this evidence along with the standards required for EPA certification to determine equivalence with a level of EPA certification. Where sufficient doubt exists, this evidence shall be forwarded to the DSB Training Director for a decision. In all cases following medical approval, a checkout dive shall be observed by the UDO or his/her designee before the beginning of diving operations. Volunteers may be accepted under a reciprocal agreement if they are certified by NOAA. Reciprocity agreements with other government agencies (e.g., the Department of Interior or Department of Energy) may be accepted with the approval of the DSB Chairperson and/or Training Director.

3.1.6 Non-EPA Diving

- a. EPA-certified divers may participate in non-EPA programs in an official capacity, provided each EPA diver abides by the provisions of this manual and that the other divers meet minimum EPA diver requirements as determined by the UDO or higher authority. Dives conducted as sanctioned activities may be included in the diver’s proficiency/qualification records.
- b. EPA divers participating in non-EPA activities and not representing the Agency will not be held to the standards contained herein. However, such dives may not be sanctioned by EPA, as noted in “c” below. EPA divers are prohibited from conducting dives that fall outside the standards provided in this document, when the diver is in pay or authorized travel status by the Agency.

Section 3 – Dive Program Elements

- c. Non-EPA dives may be considered for inclusion in the divers proficiency/qualification records only upon approval of the diver's UDO, the DSB Chairperson or the Training Director.

3.1.7 Diving Plans, Reports and Logs

Divers shall be required to log all dives. The logged information must indicate the dive location, purpose or function, maximum water depth, and bottom times as indicated in Appendix A, No. 6.

Recordkeeping

- a. The original project's dive plans, Dive Tender's logs, and dive reports will be maintained by the UDO. Topics that should be addressed in the dive plans and reports are listed in SM No. 1, *Generic Dive Plans and Reports*. A generic Dive Plan and examples of Dive Tender's logs are provided in Appendix H, EPA Diving Forms. Dive Plans should be prepared by the Divemaster for the project and signed by the UDO, and if required, by a higher local authority. Dive reports will be signed by the project Divemaster and sent to the UDO for signature. The reports should be submitted to the UDO within five working days after completion of the dive project authorized by the dive plan.
- b. Dive logs for each dive unit will be maintained by the UDO. The divers will provide the UDO with their dive log summaries on an annual basis. The annual reports of the diving activities of each unit will be provided to the Chairperson and the Technical Director of the DSB. Topics to be addressed in the unit reports are listed in Appendix I, EPA Dive Program Report. The DSB Chairperson and Technical Director will ensure that an overall report of all dive unit operations is forwarded to SHEMD annually.

3.1.8 Reporting, Investigating and Reviewing Diving Accidents

It is the responsibility of the Regional, Office, or Laboratory Director and the UDO on the diving site to ensure that any diving accident within the unit is promptly and properly reported in accordance with EPA regulations. Additional reports must be filed if necessary as required by OSHA and/or under agreement by organizational membership in the AAUS. The following details describe the investigation, reporting and reviewing requirements to EPA authorities.

- a. *All Accidents or Occupational Illnesses* must be reported to the SHEMP Manager and by completion of the appropriate report form (see forms CA-1, CA-16, CA-17, OSHA and EPA 301 and HCFA 1500) available through the Human Resources department.
- b. *Fatal Accident or Critical Injury* shall be reported immediately by telephone or other rapid means to the following:
 - i. UDO
 - ii. Regional, Office, or Laboratory Director

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- iii. DSB Chairperson
 - iv. Director of SHEMD
- c. *All Diving Accidents and Incidents*, including any potential cases of decompression illness (e.g., DCS or AGE), significant equipment malfunctions, and diving emergencies shall be reported immediately. The report routing sequence for incidences indicated as noncritical should be as follows:
- i. The Divemaster shall report immediately to the UDO and submit a written report within seven days to the UDO.
 - ii. The UDO, upon observing a diving accident or receiving the immediate supervisor's report of a diving accident, shall ensure that the supervisor of the diving operation has prepared and forwarded the necessary reports. In addition, the UDO shall prepare a detailed analysis and written report to the DSB Chairperson within 10 days after the date of the accident. Included in this report shall be the nature of the operation, existing conditions, personnel involved, type of equipment used, nature of injury or equipment failure, causal analysis, recommendations for prevention of a similar future accident, and any other pertinent facts.
 - iii. Regional, Office, or Laboratory Directors shall report immediately to the EPA DSB Chairperson by telephone or other rapid means, conduct a complete fact-finding investigation of each diving accident/incident, coordinate the reporting, and submit a written report within 30 days to the EPA DSB Chairperson.
 - iv. The EPA DSB Chairperson, EPA Technical Director, EPA DMS, and EPA DSB shall review all diving accidents and incidents and report on preventive measures to ensure safe diving. If the circumstances warrant such action, they may convene a special investigation. Recommendations for changes in operating policies or procedures shall be reported to SHEMD. In the event of a serious accident or a fatality, the Agency maintains the right and shall pursue drug testing of all key operation personnel under the Agency's drug testing protocols, as applicable.

3.2 Special Equipment and Operations

- 3.2.1 Nitrox Diving (see Appendix K)
- 3.2.2 Polluted Water Diving and Equipment Decontamination (see Appendices L and Q)
- 3.2.3 Surface Supplied Diving (see Appendix O)
- 3.2.4 Tethered Diving (see Appendix P)

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- 3.2.5 High Altitude Diving (> 1,000 ft.) (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.6 Low-Visibility Diving (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.7 Blue Water (Over-Bottom) Diving (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.8 Swift Water (Strong Current) Diving (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.9 Underwater Communications Systems (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.10 Underwater Pinger/Locator (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)
- 3.2.11 Diver Propulsion Vehicles (DPVs) (Refer to the most current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* or AAUS standards for guidance.)

3.3 EPA Diving Safety

3.3.1 Rules

The EPA Diving Safety Rules shall be adhered to on all diving operations (see Appendix A).

3.3.2 Safety Audits

Diving units shall periodically be subjected to safety quality assurance reviews. Reviews, inspections or audits shall be conducted as both an internal function by the Technical Director and by the SHEMD Safety Audit Department. UDOs should maintain a quality assurance awareness of the unit's diving equipment maintenance, compressor systems and air quality, diver records, and emergency equipment.

Program audits, involving planning, implementation, assessment, reporting and quality improvement, shall ensure that the program management and operations functions are established, monitored and continuously improved to limit EPA divers' occupational exposure to hyperbaric illnesses. The audit system includes specific activities for collecting and analyzing information to indicate levels of success and effectiveness of individual program functions. The audit activities focus on process and outcomes, and include:

- Program audits and self-assessments
- Dive incident reporting
- Quality control activities
- Operating data and reports

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- Performance standards and indicators

The Technical Director or Training Director will be responsible for managing the breathing gas quality assurance program in addition to conducting and documenting diving unit safety inspections as designated by the DSB Chairperson or as requested by the UDOs. In addition, SHEMD will be responsible for conducting periodic audits of the various diving unit programs. All audits will be conducted following procedures outlined in the audit checklist in Appendix J.

3.3.3 Maritime Safety (Refer to the EPA Vessel Safety Manual.)

3.4 **Recordkeeping**

3.4.1 Diver Training

The EPA Training Director shall maintain complete files on all divers that have completed EPA Diver Certification. This includes written tests, logs of water work, classwork, and homework. The records will be maintained by EPA for a minimum of 5 years following cessation of diving in the program.

3.4.2 Diver Medical Records

Completed forms are maintained by the DMS at the Public Health Service in Bethesda, Maryland. A copy of the completed evaluation form may be requested by the diver. The Medical Evaluation Qualification Form (page 10 of the Medical Evaluation Form) is forwarded from the DMS to the UDO, the Chairperson of the DSB, and to the Training Director for those candidates applying for the EPA Diver Training Course.

3.4.3 Dive Logs

Maintenance of an individual diver's personal log is the responsibility of that diver. The diver's UDO is responsible for maintaining the official dive records, including the original Dive Tender's logs (see Appendix H).

3.4.4 Accident/Incident Reports

Standard EPA procedures apply for reporting and recordkeeping of any work-related incidents.

3.4.5 Equipment Logs/Maintenance Records

UDOs are required to maintain the following records (or have access to those records that may be prepared by local scuba equipment maintenance specialists, such as a local dive shop): scuba tank visual inspection process (VIP) and hydrostatic tests, scuba valve and burst disk maintenance, scuba regulator system and submersible pressure gauge (annual maintenance and calibration), dry suit systems, surface supply systems, full face masks, hard hat/helmet systems, buoyancy compensator, and compressor maintenance.

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3.4.6 Project Dive Requests/Clearances

The UDO is responsible for maintaining the records of approved dive plans and clearances. A dive plan must be prepared for all EPA-sanctioned dive operations and submitted to the UDO for approval. Upon completion of the dive operation, a dive report signed by the Divemaster in charge will be submitted to the UDO, along with all original dive logs. The UDO will maintain complete records of all dive operations for seven years.

3.5 **Medical Reviews**

3.5.1 Physical Evaluation

Physical evaluation and qualification for diving will be conducted in accordance with Section 4.0, Diver Training and Certification, Subsection 4.3, “Physical Examination.”

3.5.2 Biohazard Protection

See the attached EPA SOP for biohazards in Appendix L, Biohazards of Diving Operations and Aquatic Environments (also reference the EPA National Biohazard Safety Management Program).

3.6 **Emergency Planning**

3.6.1 Diving Accident Management

- a. All EPA divers must complete training in diving accident management.
- b. Planning for diving accidents should include transportation and oxygen administration (e.g., backboarding as a potential need). It is no longer required to determine the status of a hyperbaric chamber during the planning phase, as the availability of a chamber may change while an operation is in progress.
- c. The Divemaster must pass on to emergency responders all known details of the accident but may not insist that the victim be transported to a recompression chamber instead of a hospital. (*Note: Standard Coast Guard operating procedures do not normally allow for the administration of oxygen en route unless specifically instructed by the patient. The Divemaster may be responsible for providing these instructions.*)
- d. The choice of treatment location and regime is beyond the typical training of EPA field personnel. Emergency evacuation personnel should be instructed to communicate with the Divers Alert Network (DAN) at 919-684-9111. Non-emergency diving-related inquiries should be made to DAN at 919-684-2948.

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3.6.2 Communications

The Divemaster will ensure that there is at least one means of emergency communication with shore support, such as government radio, very high frequency (VHF) radio or cellular telephone. In the event of an emergency on site, such as diver injury, sudden adverse weather, or chemical release that might have an impact outside of the immediate area, the Divemaster or his/her alternate is responsible for immediately communicating the emergency to the nearest emergency response unit and the EPA unit from which the operation is based.

3.6.3 Oxygen Administration

For any diving-related injury (e.g., DCS, AGE), providing 100% oxygen is critical to successful treatment and recovery. It is required that all personnel be familiar with how to operate the emergency oxygen equipment and complete training in oxygen administration for diving every two years, such as is available through DAN or other local sources.

3.6.4 Transportation

In the event of injury at a remote dive site, communication will be established with the closest available emergency response unit (e.g., Coast Guard, local authority via 911, VHF radio, or satellite telephone communication). The ranking dive team member will be responsible for determining the best course of action as to stabilize the diver's condition and await transportation (e.g., for Coast Guard evacuation) or to make best speed toward shore for treatment. For any diving-related injury (e.g., DCS, AGE), providing 100% oxygen is critical to successful treatment and recovery.

3.7 **Reciprocity**

To facilitate joint diving operations between EPA and colleges and universities, private institutions, grantees, states or counties, or any other agencies or entities, the UDO may institute a reciprocity agreement that has been approved by the DSB Chairperson and meets the following criteria:

- 3.7.1 Visiting non-EPA-certified divers accompanying EPA divers on EPA projects, or conducting dive projects for EPA without the presence of EPA divers, shall have or be covered by the following rules:
- a. A Scientific Diving Program, as implemented by his/her responsible organization (e.g., employer or institution of learning).
 - b. Diving training, comparable to EPA's program, for the tasks to be performed.
 - c. Approved Standards for Scientific Diving.

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- d. Written approval for diving from the responsible organization's appropriate management level.
 - e. A reciprocity agreement.
 - f. Evidence of a complete dive medical examination.
 - g. Completed equipment maintenance logs for equipment used on the subject dives.
 - h. A brief diver resume.
- 3.7.2 Any reciprocity agreement shall apply only to divers in the employ of or studying under the sponsoring institution specified in the agreement; additional agreements will be required for divers not directly covered by the sponsoring institution. No third-party agreements are allowed, per Subsection 3.7.6 below. The visiting diver must have written permission from his/her Diving Safety Officer (or UDO). In addition, the visiting diver must be covered by a comprehensive accident insurance plan by his/her sponsoring institution.
- 3.7.3 For a non-EPA diving program to be considered comparable to the EPA Diving Program, it must, at a minimum, conform to the OSHA Commercial Diving Standard (29 CFR 1910, Subpart T) or the terms of the Scientific Exemption for that standard. The EPA UDO or his/her designee shall ensure compliance with the terms of the reciprocity agreement; however, some records, such as medical records, may remain in the possession of the sponsoring institution. Compliance with the terms of this reciprocity agreement, as well as the actual diving operations, are subject to on-site inspection by members of the EPA DSB at any time. UDOs may request written verification from the reciprocating organization as to the date of the last medical examination and request that the individually named diver is cleared and rated for the given diving activities.
- 3.7.4 The reciprocity agreement may be renewed annually with the consent of all parties to the agreement, or it may be terminated or modified by the DSB Chairperson or the DSB at any time.
- 3.7.5 An EPA diver may participate in a non-EPA project in an official capacity, provided he/she conforms to the provisions of the EPA *Diving Safety Manual* and the other divers in that diving operation meet the minimum EPA diving safety requirements for the degree of difficulty and complexity for their role in the diving to be performed.
- 3.7.6 Reciprocity agreements from EPA may not cover third parties to the co-signing organizations. Dive projects that involve three or more organizations may require that each organization interested in participating in an EPA-sponsored project enter into a reciprocity agreement with EPA.

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3.7.7 Any EPA regional office or laboratory that does not have an established dive unit and that may have need for occasional diving services, is required to conduct those operations in adherence to the policies and procedures set forth under the EPA Underwater Diving Safety Management Program and this *Diving Safety Manual*. Such units are urged to seek the services of other EPA units that have this capability. Contracted diving service organizations must show proof of operating under OSHA and Coast Guard regulations and have in place their own “Diving Safety Program,” even if EPA may have oversight. The OSC or RPM should request assistance from an EPA UDO to review the contractor’s operating procedures and safety plans to ensure compliance.

3.8 Exceptions

3.8.1 Unplanned (Emergency) Deviations

Emergency conditions may warrant actions contrary to the dictates of this manual. If this occurs, a detailed written report shall be prepared by the Divemaster for the dive operation. This report shall include a description of all conditions that led to and resulted in the subject condition and actions taken to address the emergency. If an injury occurs, the report will be in accordance with Subsection 3.4, “Accident/Incident Reports.”

3.8.2 Planned Deviations – Diving by Non-EPA Divers as Observers

At the discretion of the UDO, non-EPA-certified divers may accompany an EPA dive operation as an observer of an EPA program.

EPA program sites may be visited by representatives of other agencies, the media and dignitaries for the purposes of familiarization, evaluation or reporting on EPA programs. Such visits often involve diving activities that are equivalent to recreational diving and can be safely accomplished by persons holding recreational diving credentials. The requirements of EPA diver certification for Scientific Divers are substantially more stringent than the standards of the recreational diving industry. The program must ensure that observer divers do not pose a significant hazard to EPA divers through their lack of experience and/or training.

The policy and standards provided in Subsection 3.7, “Reciprocity,” of this manual will allow EPA programs to safely accommodate observing divers who are not EPA certified but meet the requirements stated herein. Personnel not certified by EPA, in accordance with the requirements of this manual, may dive in conjunction with the activities of EPA programs as “observing divers” without obtaining EPA Diving Certification. This policy applies to EPA employees and non-EPA personnel who have been invited to observe the underwater activities of EPA while using scuba equipment. This policy shall only apply when:

- a. The observing diver does not participate in work being performed and is accompanied by a fully certified EPA diver who is not performing work.

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- b. The dive is considered light duty, involving only observation or photography under near-ideal diving conditions.
- c. The observing diver is participating in a single dive or a series of dives on a single trip not to exceed six dives per year.

Persons who fall within the scope of this policy must provide to the EPA UDO prior to participating in a dive:

- a. Evidence of diving certification by a recognized diver certifying organization (e.g., the U.S. Armed Forces).
- b. Evidence of a physical examination conducted by a medical doctor in accordance with criteria developed by the AAUS within 12 months of the date of the planned dive (report shall indicate medical fitness to dive), and the observer is willing to complete a medical questionnaire and waiver of liability for the subject dive.
- c. Evidence of diving experience indicating the appropriate level of proficiency required for the diving conditions likely to be encountered.

The UDO shall:

- a. Inspect the credentials of the observing diver (including an up-to-date logbook) and determine whether the observing diver has presented evidence establishing certification by an approved organization and has had a physical examination within 12 months prior to the date of the planned dive.
- b. Determine if the observing diver's experience level and proficiency are adequate for the conditions likely to be encountered on the dive. The UDO or Divemaster shall conduct an in-water evaluation of the observing diver, if necessary. The observer should show proof of conducting at least one dive to the depth of the planned dive within the past three months or participate in a scuba review at the observer's expense.
- c. Inspect the observing diver's equipment for serviceability. (*Note:* Items considered by the Divemaster to be unserviceable will be replaced with appropriate equipment provided by the observing diver.)
- d. Ensure that the observing diver is informed of the EPA Diving Safety Rules and that those rules are complied with during the dive. (*Note:* The observer shall sign a statement indicating his/her understanding of the EPA Diving Safety Rules, and this shall be countersigned by the facility/installation director.)

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- e. Maintain a file on each observer diver. The file shall include but not be limited to a dive log, a copy of the certification, the physical examination, and a signed/countersigned statement of EPA Diving Safety Rules understanding.
- f. Retain the authority to suspend the diving operation based on his/her judgment regarding the ability of the observing diver, the adequacy of the diver's equipment, or the conditions at the dive site.

4.0 DIVER TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

4.1 Need for Divers

Because EPA programs frequently require competent underwater operations, there is a demonstrated need for EPA employees who are capable of such operations. The roster of qualified divers and diving contractors cross-referenced to areas of expertise will be maintained by the Training Director and the UDOs. Where demonstrated needs exist, the DSB Chairperson and UDOs shall aid the various Regional, Office and Laboratory (Unit) Directors in analyzing diving needs. Should circumstances dictate the need for more divers to fulfill operational requirements, additional personnel may be selected and properly trained.

4.2 Application for Training

EPA personnel with or without previous training may apply through proper channels to the appropriate Unit Director to be considered for EPA diver training and certification when the need exists. Diver training may be provided by the EPA Diver Training Center in Gulf Breeze, Florida, or by the NOAA Diving Center in Seattle, Washington.

4.2.1 As part of the application process to the EPA Training Center, each applicant for initial training, as well as those for certification based on past training, must complete the following preliminary actions that may apply:

- a. Complete the physical examination as described in Subsection 4.3, “Physical Examination.”
- b. Provide evidence of CPR and first aid training.
- c. Provide evidence of basic scuba certification (completing at least four “open water” certification dives) by a nationally recognized organization. All prospective EPA divers must have successfully completed a basic diver training course offered by a recognized agencies (e.g., the National Association of Underwater Instructors, Professional Association of Diving Instructors, Young Men’s Christian Association Scuba Training Program, National Association of Scuba Diving Schools, approved colleges or universities) and provide the Training Director with a photocopy of the certification.
- d. The individual’s supervisor must submit a letter of request to the DSB Training Director for EPA diver training and/or certification stating the need for the diver candidate to enter the program. The diver candidate’s UDO or supervisor must submit the letter of request to:

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U.S. EPA, Diver Training Center
Gulf Ecology Division
1 Sabine Island
Gulf Breeze, Florida 32561
Attn: Director, EPA Diver Training

- e. Successfully perform the swimming skills described in Subsection 4.4.2, “Swimming Skills.”
 - f. Submit a diver resume indicating prior experience. Documentation should include copies of dive logs and the types of diving conducted to date.
 - g. For certification based on prior training and experience, submit verification of prior training and experience through the UDO to the EPA Training Director and DSB Chairperson for approval and pass the standard EPA scuba written examination. An employee who applies for training and/or certification must volunteer the application of personal skills for EPA programs. The need for the employee’s skill in EPA programs shall be considered by the appropriate official before taking action beyond this point.
- 4.2.2 Applicants for diver training at the NOAA Diving Center must fulfill the requirements in the Application for Training and Physical Examination sections of the NOAA Diving Program Administrative and Safety Rules (as currently provided).

4.3 Physical Examination

- 4.3.1 EPA employees must be medically qualified to perform their diving-related duties. Medical qualification is obtained when the DMS provides a signed qualification statement to the UDO, as provided in the Medical Evaluation Form in Appendix C (non-EPA divers use Appendix D). Only the DMS or his/her designee can provide this qualification statement.
- 4.3.2 Full medical examinations are required:
- a. Prior to diver training and certification.
 - b. Annually thereafter while continuing in an EPA diving status, allowing 15 months from the sign-off date, provided the physical examination has been submitted prior to the end of the 12th month.
 - c. After a serious accident, injury, or illness at the discretion of the UDO.
 - d. Upon recommendation of the DMS and approval of the DSB Chairperson and SHEMD.

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- e. Upon termination of EPA diving-related duties.
- 4.3.3 UDOs will make the necessary arrangements to ensure that diver medical examinations occur in a timely manner. UDOs will provide divers/candidates with the official EPA Diving Medical Examination Form (gray shaded area for completion by candidate) and the NOAA Medical Examination Forms (SF-88 and SF-93) if required for submission to NOAA.
- 4.3.4 UDOs will ensure that candidates and divers report to the closest EPA-contracted medical provider for completion of the examination. The diver/candidate has the responsibility to complete the medical history portion of the evaluation form. Any questions or statements that are unclear to the candidate should be identified to the examining physician for clarification.
- 4.3.5 UDOs will ensure that the completed examination and all of the associated diagnostic studies are forwarded to the DMS for review and determination of diver qualification. The completed examination form, with attached diagnostic tests, should be forwarded to:

Division of Federal Occupational Health
Occupational Medicine Specialist (Attn: Dr. Christopher S. Holland)
4350 East-West Highway, Room 3-2A2
Bethesda, MD 20814

- Examinations conducted by Federal Occupational Health units will automatically be forwarded to the address above. The UDOs shall ensure that examinations conducted by private providers/personal physicians are completed and forwarded to the indicated address. The candidate should always retain a photocopy of the forwarded form for his/her own personal files and for inclusion in any emergency medical response that may be required.
- 4.3.6 Confidential medical evaluation forms should be forwarded as indicated in Subsection 4.3.5 above by the examining physician in a double-sealed envelope. The completed evaluation form and supporting information should be placed in an envelope labeled “Confidential Medical Information” and sealed. This envelope should be placed in a secondary envelope for mailing to the above address. This second envelope should also be labeled “Diving Examination” at the lower left corner.
- 4.3.7 UDOs will obtain qualification statements for each of their candidates and divers from the DMS. The DMS shall also forward a copy of the qualification statement to the DSB Chairperson. Should a quick response be required, a special request can be submitted, allowing for review and qualification to be made by electronic facsimile transmission.
- 4.3.8 When the examination absolutely cannot be conducted by the EPA medical

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contractor, the private provider should complete the EPA Diving Medical Examination Form and forward it, as detailed above, to the DMS. The private provider is responsible for identifying and describing any abnormal, historical, or physical findings. As the private provider/personal physician may not necessarily be professionally qualified or experienced in diving medicine, the DMS alone will be responsible for determining diving duty medical qualification from the available data.

- 4.3.9 Applicants with a recommendation of “disqualifying medical conditions” will be ineligible for diver training. Current EPA divers with such conditions will be recommended for removal from diving-related duties.
- 4.3.10 Applicants or current divers with medical conditions that represent a relative disqualification may be recommended for temporary suspension from diving-related duties until a final determination can be made. Some extenuating circumstances, however, may be accommodated. The formal recommendation of the DMS will be considered, but the DSB Chairperson will make the final decision. The following options are available:
- a. In some instances, divers may have their medical conditions accommodated in a manner that allows them to safely continue the majority of their diving-related duties.
 - b. In some cases, at the recommendation of the DMS and the approval of the DSB Chairperson, a waiver board may be convened to consider the medical data and offer guidance to the DSB Chairperson.

4.4 EPA Diver Certification

EPA conducts periodic diver training courses at the EPA Dive Training Center in Gulf Breeze, Florida. A more detailed description of course contents is in the most current version of the EPA Diver Training Curriculum.

4.4.1 Initial Training

For those approved applicants with no previous training, initial diver training shall be taken through one of the following training programs:

- a. Regularly scheduled and properly announced official EPA courses approved by the EPA Training Director with the advice and assistance of the DSB.
- b. Equivalent basic scuba diver training programs authorized by the EPA Training Director, or his/her designee, plus supplemental training through the Training Director to ensure that the student has satisfactorily completed all elements of the EPA scuba training curriculum.

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- c. Regularly scheduled NOAA diver training courses announced annually.

4.4.2 Swimming Skills

Following approval of the physical examination, each applicant shall demonstrate the following swimming exercises to the UDO, Training Director, or their designee, showing a noticeable degree of confidence and excellent swimming skills:

- a. Swim 250 yards, using any stroke (e.g., the crawl, sidestroke, and/or backstroke) or swim a distance of one-quarter mile (440 yards) on the surface in full scuba gear.
- b. Swim a horizontal distance of 50 feet at a constant shallow depth underwater without surfacing (alternatively this may be conducted in full scuba gear with the air supply closed).
- c. Stay afloat for 15 minutes.
- d. Transport another person 25 yards on the surface of the water without the use of swim aids and/or transport another diver in full scuba gear 50 yards.
- e. Surface dive to a depth of 10 feet using mask, snorkel and fins to recover a 4-pound weight and clear the snorkel upon returning to the surface.
- f. Conduct the following exercises:
 - i. Enter the water in full scuba gear by giant stride.
 - ii. Demonstrate mask clearing.
 - iii. Breathe with an alternate air source with a buddy.
 - iv. Use underwater hand signals.
 - v. Demonstrate equipment removal/replacement.
 - vi. Exit the water using a boat ladder and stow equipment.

4.4.3 Written Examination

All applicants for EPA certification shall pass a standard EPA written examination. The passing score for each part shall be 70%. Applicants failing any part must take a reexamination of the failed part and have a subsequent score of 90% on Sections A and B with 100% on Section C. The candidate is responsible for reviewing any incorrect answers and correcting the errors to confirm a thorough understanding of the material (e.g., achieving a 100% understanding). The Training Director is responsible for preparation, administration and scoring of the examination.

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4.4.4 Diving Evaluation

Prospective divers must demonstrate their proficiency and skill in diving by performing a checkout dive with the appropriate training course supervisor or designee.

4.4.5 Certification

Upon completion of basic scuba training requirements, satisfactory written and medical examinations, and EPA field diver evaluations appropriate to the situation, the EPA Training Director shall make a final review of all certification requests. EPA employees shall then be considered for certification in one of the following categories.

- a. Trainee Diver. An EPA employee with initial diver training by a recognized training agency and has logged less than 25 dives. Trainees may not perform scientific dives, but may accompany two Scientific Divers as an observer. In cases where two Scientific Divers may not be required (e.g., in simple site observations and photography), the Trainee Diver may accompany a single Scientific Diver.
- b. Scientific Diver. An EPA diver who has:
 - i. Completed a minimum of 25 logged dives.
 - ii. Demonstrated proficiency to carry out assigned tasks as may be required during EPA's Annual Diver Training Program, such as:
 - (a) Variable volume dry suit use
 - (b) Full-face mask use
 - (c) Underwater voice communication system use
 - (d) Underwater object recovery by use of a lift bag
 - (e) Underwater pipe frame object assembly/disassembly
 - (f) Underwater pipe flange assembly/disassembly
 - (g) Underwater pinger locator use
 - (h) Maintain buddy awareness and monitor for signs of decompression illness
 - iii. By passing EPA's written examination, demonstrate a proficiency in:
 - (a) Dive physics
 - (b) Dive physiology
 - (c) Decompression table use
 - (d) Decompression illness signs/symptoms
 - (e) Oxygen administration
 - (f) Dive accident management
 - (g) Dive equipment
- c. Divemaster. An EPA Scientific Diver who has:
 - i. Successfully completed the requirements for an EPA Scientific Diver (above).

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- ii. Demonstrated proficiency in conducting the duties of Divemaster as may be conducted during the EPA's Annual Diver Training Program, such as:
 - (a) Supervising divers in conducting assigned tasks
 - (b) If available for use, supervising divers by underwater voice communication
 - (c) Maintaining diver time and activity logs
 - (d) Monitoring divers breathing gas supply
 - (e) Monitoring divers for signs of decompression illness
 - (f) Conducting a simulated unconscious diver rescue and recovery
- iii. Completed a minimum of 100 logged official work and training dives
- iv. Successfully completed a diving supervision course (e.g., Divemaster training course)
- v. Supervised two or more dives with the UDO or his/her designee
- vi. Obtained experience in a variety of diving conditions

4.4.6 Depth Limitations

The EPA Diving Safety Program currently does not provide for formal certification of individual diver depth limitations. However, the limitations as provided by other programs (e.g., AAUS standards) generally comply with the guidelines based upon EPA diver ratings of Trainee, Scientific Diver, and Divemaster and authorizations as provided by the dive plan approval process. Diving is not permitted beyond 190 feet.

- a. Standard Depth Authorization Levels: 0 – 130 feet seawater (FSW)
 - i. Authorization to 30 Foot Depth: This is the initial permit level, upon approval of a diver as a Trainee as indicated above in Subsection 4.4.5.a.
 - ii. Authorization to 60 Foot Depth: A Scientific Diver is authorized to dive to a depth of 60 feet after successfully completing training per Subsection 4.4.5.b, or the equivalent, or a Trainee Diver authorized in writing by the UDO for a specific dive plan.
 - iii. Authorization to 100 and 130 Foot Depths: A Scientific Diver authorized to depths of 60 feet may be authorized to depths of 100 and 130 feet, respectively, by logging four dives near the maximum depth category. These qualification dives shall be validated by the signature (i.e., verifying the diver's logbook) of two authorized individuals who are divers certified to at least the same depth or by authorization of the UDO per dive plan approval. As emphasized in the EPA Worker Diver Training, the diver will have demonstrated proficiency in the use of the appropriate decompression tables.
- b. Authorization to Depths Over 130 FSW: Normally, EPA dives shall not exceed 130 FSW. Proposals and dive plans for depths greater than 130

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FSW will require written approval from the DSB Chairperson. A diver may be authorized to depths of 150 and 190 FSW after the completion of four training dives near each depth. Dives shall be planned and executed under the close supervision of a diver certified to this depth and the plans approved by the DSB Chairperson. The diver must also demonstrate knowledge of the special problems associated with deep diving (e.g., decompression diving, mixed gases), and unique safety requirements and equipment (e.g., redundant air supply) required for the specified depths.

- c. Progression to Next Depth Level: A diver under the auspices of EPA may exceed his/her depth certification only if accompanied by a diver certified to a greater depth. Under these circumstances, the diver may exceed his/her depth limit by one step.

4.5 Issuance

- 4.5.1 An EPA Diver Certification shall be issued by the EPA Training Director based upon the recommendations of the training team (e.g., Training Director, UDOs, Instructors and Divemasters), following final review of each applicant's submitted documents. The EPA Training Director shall issue a Letter of Certification (see Appendix F) to the diver and to the diving program file established for the diver. (*Note: This file is subject to requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974.*)
- 4.5.2 EPA recognizes and accepts diver certifications issued by the Director, NOAA Diving Program, for candidates who successfully complete the NOAA Diver Certification process.

4.6 Prior Equivalent Diver Training

UDOs may evaluate the credentials of a dive candidate with prior non-EPA dive training and experience for application into the EPA Diving Program. After the candidate successfully passes the medical examination for diving and the written EPA scuba examination, the UDO will determine if the applicant sufficiently meets EPA's criteria as a Trainee or Scientific Diver. If the candidate does not meet either of these criteria, he/she will be required to take refresher training as directed by the EPA Training Director. If the candidate meets the Trainee or Scientific Diver criteria, the UDO shall:

1. Observe the candidate in demonstrating the required swimming skills (see Subsection 4.4.2).
2. Observe the dive candidate in a checkout dive.
3. Forward to the EPA Training Director all appropriate documents along with a recommendation for the level of EPA certification to be granted.

4.7 Requalification

The EPA Training Director, or designee, may requalify a diver whose qualification has lapsed after the diver has again completed the requirements for proficiency. A diver may be required to requalify based upon medical issues, such as following serious accident, injury, or illness, at the discretion of the UDO per Subsections 4.3.2.c and 4.3.10.

A requalification program should be established by each UDO to requalify divers under his/her jurisdiction. A diver with more than 12 months lapse without a dive may be required, at the recommendation of the DSB or the UDO, to attend the EPA Diver Certification Course in order to be requalified for diving activities.

4.8 Suspension of a Qualification

An EPA diver qualification may be suspended for cause by the UDO or DSB Chairperson. Violation of any policy in this *Diving Safety Manual* or lack of sound judgment may be considered cause. The diver shall be informed in writing of the reasons for suspension and will be given the opportunity to appeal the suspension in writing to the EPA Diving Safety Board.

Violations of regulations in this *Diving Safety Manual* include, but are not limited to:

- a. Not maintaining one or all of the EPA field safety and health requirements including CPR, first aid and annual medical monitoring.
- b. Not maintaining diving proficiency by completing a minimum of one dive each quarter.
- c. Violating any requirements in this *Diving Safety Manual* that could endanger themselves or others.

If a diver is suspended and fails to appeal to the DSB or meet requalification as specified by the UDO or DSB within a year's time, or if a diver repeatedly lapses in maintaining the requirements listed in this manual or demonstrates poor judgment, possibly endangering themselves or others, then the diver's EPA certification may be revoked, subject to review by the DSB.

APPENDIX A

EPA Diving Safety Rules

EPA DIVING SAFETY RULES

1. Certification. Each diver must have a valid EPA certification or EPA-approved equivalent.
2. Solo Diving. No one may dive unattended.
3. Depth Limits. A Trainee Diver is authorized to a depth of 30 FSW. With authorization by the UDO for a specific dive plan, a Trainee Diver may dive to a depth of 60 FSW. A Scientific Diver, after successfully completing training per Section 4.0, Diver Training and Certification, Subsection 4.4.5.b, is authorized to a depth of 60 FSW without additional training. Scientific Divers conducting dives in excess of 100 FSW shall have commensurate training or experience working at the proposed depth. Normally, EPA dives shall not exceed 130 FSW. Proposals and dive plans for dives planned to depths greater than 130 FSW will require written approval from the EPA DSB Chairman. Dives to be conducted at depths greater than 130 FSW require additional diver training, and a working decompression chamber must be available at the dive site. See Section 4.0, Diver Training and Certification, Subsection 4.4.6, "Depth Limitations," for specific guidelines, depth limits, and training requirements.

Dives conducted in excess of 100 feet require that divers have commensurate training and/or experience working at the proposed depth. If no prior experience exists, the diver should complete a checkout dive to the planned water depth or greater within six weeks of the scheduled working dive. Depending upon conditions, and at the recommendation of the Divemaster or UDO, an alternate or redundant air source may be required. See Section 4.0, Subsection 4.4.6, "Depth Limitations," for additional individual recommendations.

4. No-Decompression Tables. All no-decompression dives using compressed air will be conducted using the most recent U.S. Navy Standard Air No-Decompression Tables. No-Decompression Tables, as provided in Appendix B, should be copied for use by some photocopy or photographic method that reproduces an exact copy.
5. Ascent Rates. The most recent version of the U.S. Navy *Diving Manual*, Volume 2: Air Diving Operations has set the standard ascent rate to 30 FSW per minute for direct ascents to the surface, with an acceptable range of 20 to 40 FSW per minute.
6. Diving Logs. All EPA divers are required to maintain an EPA personal dive log. The information logged must include the dive location, purpose

- or function, maximum water depth, and bottom time. In addition, the Dive Tender shall also record (on the Dive Tender's log) any other information that is needed by the Divemaster or the UDO. The Dive Tender must also record the diver's surface interval time for repetitive dives. The diver must log his/her bottom (subsurface) time and surface interval time in the case of repetitive dives. A dive is completed when a diver leaves the water after completing an activity, or after surfacing for more than 10 minutes, before resubmerging to perform a different activity.
- a. Bottom Time. The total elapsed time rounded up to whole minutes from when a diver leaves the surface to begin his/her descent until the time the diver begins a direct ascent to the surface is "bottom time." A "dive" is that time and activity spent beneath the surface of the water by a person equipped with diving gear.
 - b. Safety Stop. When possible, divers should include a safety stop (i.e., time spent to help dissolved nitrogen evolve from tissues) at 15 FSW for 3 minutes to reduce the chance of decompression illnesses. Safety stop time is not typically added to bottom time, as tissues are in the process of releasing nitrogen.
 - c. Surface Interval. This refers to the time that divers have spent on the surface following a dive, beginning as soon as the divers surface and ending as soon as they begin their next descent. For surface intervals less than 10 minutes, add the total bottom time of the previous dive to that of the repetitive dive and choose the decompression schedule for the bottom time and the deepest water depth achieved for the sequence.
7. Decompression Tables. All decompression dives using compressed air (i.e., other than NOAA Nitrox I or II) will be conducted using the U.S. Navy Standard Air Decompression Tables (in the most recent version of the U.S. Navy *Diving Manual*, Volume 2: Air Diving Operations. Decompression Tables should be copied for use by some photographic method that reproduces an exact copy. Decompression dives using NOAA Nitrox mixtures will be conducted using the appropriate NOAA protocol.
8. Decompression Dives. Routine working dives shall not exceed the U.S. Navy no-decompression limits. Diving activities that exceed the limits of no-decompression will be permitted only under the following conditions:
- a. Proposal. A detailed dive plan has been reviewed by the UDO or the DSB Chairman.
 - b. Competence. The project leader must demonstrate to the UDO or

- his/her designee that the Divemaster and all members of the diving team have a thorough knowledge of decompression and repetitive dive principles.
- c. **Dive Team.** The team must be composed of no fewer than five people: two divers in the water, a standby diver, a Dive Tender, and a Divemaster.
 - d. **Equipment.** Each participating diver must wear a watch or bottom timer and a depth gauge and have on hand a decompression schedule for the maximum proposed depth of dive.
 - e. **Decompression Chamber.** Must be on site attended by trained personnel.
9. **High Altitude Diving.** Decompression tables, depth of stops, rate of ascent, and repetitive dive planning must be altered for safe diving at altitudes above 1,000 feet. The current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual* should be used as a guide for diving at high altitudes.
 10. **Flying After Diving.** Wait a minimum surface interval of 12 hours prior to flying after diving. When making daily multiple dives for several days or making a dive requiring an emergency decompression stop, extend the surface interval beyond 12 hours. Whenever possible wait 24 hours before flying.
 11. **Over-Bottom Dives.** Dives in water where a diver could sense a loss of orientation or descend below safe diving depths are to be considered over-bottom dives. No over-bottom dives shall be made unless some direct contact with the surface is maintained — such as net web, a marked line suspended from a surface float, or depth gauges for all participants — which permit the divers to determine when ascent or descent occurs. Additional procedures can be found in the current edition of the NOAA *Diving Manual*.
 12. **Boat Tending.** During dives beyond swimming distance from shore or those in areas of strong currents, a small boat with a qualified operator will tend the divers (see Item 19.j on the use of “diver down” flag).
 13. **Ship Activities.** When appropriate during ship-related diving activities, the “Dive Safe Ship Operations Checklist” (i.e., NOAA Form 64-3) will be used and completed.
 14. **Decompression Chamber.** The location, accessibility, and telephone number of all accessible and operable decompression chambers shall be

listed in the dive plan and be available to all participating divers for each diving operation.

15. Emergency Procedures. The UDOs, or their designee, with the approval of the EPA DSB will prescribe emergency procedures to be used in handling diving-related accidents in the operational area, and all divers shall be familiar with these procedures.
16. Diving Accident Management Training. All divers shall have completed diving accident management training, certification for CPR and first aid training, and appropriate refresher training to maintain skills. A first aid kit is required to be available for all dive operations (SM-05).
17. The first aid kit should include, at a minimum:
 - Pocket rescue mask (for mouth-to-mouth)
 - Surgical gloves (disposable)
 - Blood pressure cuff & stethoscope
 - Digital thermometer
 - Rescue shears
 - Forceps
 - Safety pins
 - Sterile scalpels
 - Adhesive bandages (e.g., Band-aids[®])
 - Butterfly closures
 - Tape (e.g., Steri-Strip[®], Dermaclear[®])
 - Sterile dressings (assorted: 2" x 2", 2" x 3", 4" x 4")
 - Compress (assorted sizes, including large)
 - Cling bandage rolls
 - Elastic bandage (Ace type)
 - Triangle bandage
 - Sterile eyewash solution
 - Occlusive dressing (Vaseline covered)
 - Silvidine ointment (for burns)
 - Vinegar (for stings)
 - Povidine-iodine (e.g., Prep-sep, Betadine)
 - Triple antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, Bacitracin, Polymyxin)
 - Tincture of Benzoin (aerosol)
 - Q-tips
 - Ice packs
 - Alcohol prep pads
 - Oxygen (with demand/resuscitator valve as well as bag mask), see Item 18 below.

(Note: All sterile materials should be provided in unit doses, not in bulk.)
18. Emergency Oxygen.
 - a. An oxygen resuscitator of at least 650 liters (e.g., single Jumbo D or E cylinders or multiple smaller cylinders) capable of ventilating a non-breathing person shall be immediately available at each dive site, if permitted by local laws regarding resuscitating equipment. This emergency oxygen kit must be on the dive platform and be

capable of servicing two divers with demand second stage regulators (i.e., capable of providing 100% oxygen) at the same time, because both divers of a buddy pair will likely have the same exposure and thus, may exhibit the same symptoms.

- b. Divers and diver support personnel shall be trained in the use of this equipment.
- c. In administering oxygen, interrupt oxygen breathing after each 30 minutes with a 5-minute period of breathing air.

19. Diving Equipment.

- a. Life Support. Open-circuit scuba using compressed air or oxygen-enriched air shall be standard. Other types of equipment (i.e., surface-supplied diving equipment, closed-circuit rebreathers, semiclosed units, or other types of diving apparatus using gas mixtures) may be approved for use by the EPA DSB Chairman, Technical Director, or Training Director. Individuals requesting use of these other types of equipment must have been trained and qualified in their use:
 - i. Scuba Cylinders. Only those cylinders approved for containing compressed air by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) for the purpose of diving may be used in the EPA Diving Program. Cylinder types currently in use for EPA diving include:
 - * 72 cu. ft. steel, 2250 psi working pressure (wp)
 - * 50, 63, 80 cu. ft. aluminum, 3000 psi wp
 - * High-pressure steel, 50, 65, 80, 100, 120 cu. ft., 3500 psi wp with appropriate valve and regulator design
 - ii. Scuba Valves. Valve types are matched to the cylinder rating and regulator type. Typical valve types are the:
 - * J-valve (reserve type)
 - * K-valve
 - * DIN valve used in the newer high-pressure cylinders
 - iii. Scuba Regulators and Full Mask Systems. Most major manufacturer open-circuit (exhaled air exhausted to environment versus being recirculated) regulator systems with demand second stages are appropriate for use in EPA diving. Specific models will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis. Special considerations may be necessary for contaminated water diving.
 - iv. Surface Supplied Air. Please refer to Appendix O: Surface

Supplied Diving SOP.

- b. Alternate Air Source. To allow for the eventuality of a termination of a team member's air supply, each free swimming scuba diver will have available on his/her system an alternate air source. The alternate air source may be any of the following:
- A buddy's spare second stage regulator either independent (e.g., "octopus") or integral to the buoyancy control device (BCD) low-pressure inflation system (e.g., Air-2[®])
 - A redundant air system (e.g., "pony" bottle or dual manifold system)
 - "Bail-out" system
 - A self-contained scuba unit (e.g., Spare-Air[®])
 - Sharing a single air supply with a buddy (i.e., buddy breathing)
- c. Harness, Backpacks, and Weight Belt. All harnesses, backpacks without flotation, and weight belts must have a quick release.
- d. Flotation Device. Each free swimming scuba diver shall wear an adequate flotation device, such as a buoyancy compensator, that has two means of inflation: low pressure via tank supply and oral (see note e. below).
- e. Variable Volume Dry Suits (VVDS). VVDS will be used only after satisfactory completion of a minimum of three hours of training in the use of these suits (two hours of which must have been in open water) from qualified persons designated by the EPA DSB Training Director, or equivalent prior experience verified by a qualified EPA UDO or designee.

Caution: BCDs that might obstruct inflation or exhaust valves should not be worn over VVDS. A BCD is neither required nor recommended for use in any surface supplied system. As VVDS do not qualify for flotation in use of SCUBA, another appropriate BCD should be used that will not obstruct the valve systems.

In contaminated water environments, the BCD should be capable of being decontaminated or be considered expendable. This is particularly important to note for the use of oral inflation devices, which could allow direct oral exposure to harmful materials.

Note: VVDS (particularly shell type) manufacturers do not

provide warranty for floatation of their suits. Therefore, the user assumes full risk if no additional BCD is used. As such, the user should use a BCD that meets the following requirements:

- i. It does not obstruct the operation of the valves on the VVDS
 - ii. If the BCD will be used in chemically, biologically, or radiologically contaminated environments, then the BCD must be capable of being decontaminated (interior as well as exterior) by a method appropriate to the contamination present without degradation of the device or operation of the device. If no BCD is available to meet the criteria, the VVDS must be thoroughly inspected for abnormal wear or seam stress, which may indicate a potential failure before/after each use. By the same token, dry suits should be “qualified” for contaminated environment use by manufacturer warranty, or suit materials (especially seams, seals, and closures/zippers) should be compatibility tested.
- f. Compass. An underwater compass shall be carried by each free swimming diver on all dives.
 - g. Depth Gauge. A depth gauge shall be carried by each diver on all dives.
 - h. Dive Computers/Decompression Meters. Each diver should have his/her own dive computer for tracking a dive and must demonstrate proficiency to the on-site Divemaster. A buddy team cannot share a single computer. An individual's dive computer may be used to control a dive after approval by the Divemaster if the use of a computer enhances the diver's ability to accomplish a given task while maintaining a safe dive profile or if diving under another agency's dive program that allows the use of computers to control the dive and with whom EPA has an established diving reciprocity agreement.

Failure of a dive computer during a dive (e.g., loss of battery power, incorrect information being displayed, water leakage) shall require an immediate abort of the dive if the diver has no other means of monitoring dive depth and dive time. A failed computer must be replaced before diving may resume. Maximum depth and dive time for the aborted dive will be obtained from the diver's buddy. Please refer to Appendix M, Dive Computer Guidelines, for more information.

- i. Diving Timer. A diving watch or other suitable timing device shall

be worn by each member of a scuba diving team. In all cases, an accurate time record of any dive must be kept.

- j. **Diving Flag.** An appropriate diving flag shall be shown at all times while actively diving, according to U.S. Coast Guard regulations.
 - k. **Air Compressor.** No person shall operate a scuba air compressor without having first read the instructions and assisted an operator experienced in its use. An operational log shall be maintained for all EPA scuba compressors. Compressed air, from all active compressors, shall be tested every six months by an approved method.
 - l. **Submersible Pressure Gauge.** Each diver shall have a submersible gauge capable of directly reading the breathing gas pressure in his/her gas supply as an integral part of his/her scuba regulator system.
 - m. **Line Cutter/Dive Knife.** Each diver shall carry at least one line cutter (e.g., dive knife, scissors, or other cutting tool) for use in release of line entrapment.
 - n. **Emergency Signaling Device.** Each diver shall carry or have as integral part of his/her dive equipment an emergency signaling device (e.g., whistle, compressed air horn/whistle, mirror, light, or inflatable signal tube).
20. **Equipment Maintenance.** All diving gear and accessory equipment shall be maintained in a safe operating condition. Manufacturers' recommended servicing policies shall be followed. Equipment in questionable condition shall be tested, repaired, overhauled, or discarded. Such equipment should be kept separate from operational equipment and clearly identified. All regulators, regulatory valves, depth gauges, submersible pressure gauges, and decompression meters must be critically examined, checked for accuracy, and calibrated by a competent mechanic or appropriate specialist every 12 months. A record of the inspection and repair will be filed with the UDO.
21. **Scuba Cylinder Inspection and Testing.** All scuba cylinders must be visually inspected annually by a qualified scuba tank inspector, who will attach a dated visual inspection sticker to the cylinder. Cylinders will be hydrostatically tested at least every five years. The dates of the last hydrostatic test must be stamped on the cylinder.
22. **Air.** Scuba cylinders shall be charged only with air or an oxygen-enriched

air mixture certified as meeting established air standards. Standards for diver's breathing air are discussed in the following sources:

- Compress Gas Association Grade E (minimum standard)
 - American Academy of Underwater Sciences "Oxygen-Compatible" Air (for use in oxygen-clean cylinders)
 - U.S. Navy *Diving Manual* (Revision 6, April 15, 2008) Section 4-3.1, Diver's Breathing Gas Purity Standards, Diver's Breathing Air, specifically the U.S. Military Diver's Breathing Air Standards from Table 4-2, Diver's Compressed Air Breathing Requirements if from Commercial Source (FED SPEC BB-A-1034 Grade A Source I (pressurized container) or Source II (compressor) air:
 - Oxygen: 20–22% by volume
 - Carbon Dioxide: maximum 500 ppm (by volume)
 - Carbon Monoxide: maximum 10 ppm (by volume)
 - Total Hydrocarbons (as methane): maximum 25 ppm (by volume)
 - Particulates and oil mist: maximum 5 mg/m³
 - Odor and taste: not objectionable
 - Separated Water: none
 - Total water: maximum 20 mg/m³
 - Halogenated Compounds: maximum 0.2 ppm (by volume)
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standard for Commercial Diving Operations (29 CFR 1910, Subpart T)
 - American National Standards Institute, Z86.1 standard
23. Minimum Air Supply. Divers must surface with a minimum of 500 psig in the tank as a safety factor for reaching the shore or boat and to prevent inclusion of water in the cylinder.

APPENDIX B

U.S. Navy Dive Tables

(15 April 2008)

Air

No-Decompression Dive Tables

&

NOAA

Nitrox I (32% O₂ / 68% N₂)

No-Decompression Dive Tables

Notes:



US EPA NO-DECOMPRESSION DIVE TABLES - AIR*



PTH->	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	SURFACE INTERVAL TABLE																					
GROUP																																									
A	57	36	26	20	17	14	12	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	->	->	->	->	A->	0:10	2:20															
B	101	60	43	33	27	23	20	17	15	14	12	10	9	7	6	6	5	4	4	->	->	->	B->	0:10	1:17	1:16	3:36														
C	158	88	61	47	38	32	27	24	21	19	17	14	12	11	9	8	7	6	6	->	->	C->	0:10	0:56	2:12	0:55	2:11	4:31													
D	245	121	82	62	50	42	36	31	28	25	22	19	16	14	12	11	10	9	8	->	D->	0:10	0:53	1:48	0:52	1:47	3:04	3:03	5:23												
E	426	163	106	78	62	52	44	39	34	31	28	23	20	17	15	14	12	10	10	E->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:40	3:56	0:52	1:44	2:39	3:55	6:15									
F		217	133	97	76	63	53	46	41	37	33	28	24	21	18	16	15	->	F->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:38	3:32	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:31	4:48	7:08									
G		297	165	117	91	74	63	55	48	43	39	32	28	24	21	19	->	G->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:38	3:30	4:24	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:23	5:41	8:00								
H		449	205	140	107	87	73	63	56	50	45	37	32	28	25	20	H->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:17	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:16	6:32	8:52							
I			256	166	125	100	84	72	63	56	51	42	36	30	->	I->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:14	6:09	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:08	7:25	9:44						
J			330	198	145	115	95	82	71	63	57	47	39	->	J->	0:10	0:53	1:45	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:07	7:01	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	7:00	8:17	10:36					
K			461	236	167	131	108	92	80	71	60	48	->	K->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:53	9:10	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:52	9:09	11:29					
L				285	193	148	121	102	89	74	->	->	L->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:51	8:45	10:02	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:50	8:44	10:01	12:21				
M				354	223	168	135	114	92	->	->	M->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:51	8:43	9:38	10:54	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:50	8:42	10:53	13:13				
N				469	260	190	151	125	->	->	N->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:51	8:43	9:35	10:30	11:46	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:50	8:42	9:34	10:29	11:45	14:05		
O				595	307	215	163	->	->	O->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:51	8:43	9:35	10:28	11:22	12:38	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:50	8:42	9:34	10:27	11:21	12:37	14:58	
Z					371	232	->	->	Z->	0:10	0:53	1:45	2:38	3:30	4:22	5:14	6:07	6:59	7:51	8:43	9:35	10:28	11:20	12:14	13:31	0:52	1:44	2:37	3:29	4:21	5:13	6:06	6:58	7:50	8:42	9:34	10:27	11:19	12:13	13:30	15:50

Based on USN Tables, Latest Rev.

Z O N M L K J I H G F E D C B A



US EPA RESIDUAL NITROGEN TABLE FOR AIR*



US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

DEPTH ⌋	Z ⌋	O ⌋	N ⌋	M ⌋	L ⌋	K ⌋	J ⌋	I ⌋	H ⌋	G ⌋	F ⌋	E ⌋	D ⌋	C ⌋	B ⌋	A ⌋	DEPTH ⌋
10												427	246	159	101	58	10
									NO LIMIT								
15									450	298	218	164	122	89	61	37	15
									NO LIMIT								
20						462	331	257	206	166	134	106	83	62	44	27	20
									NO LIMIT								
25			470	354	286	237	198	167	141	118	98	79	63	48	34	21	25
			125	241	309	358	397	428	454	477	497	516	532	547	561	574	
30	372	308	261	224	194	168	146	126	108	92	77	63	51	39	28	18	30
		63	110	147	177	203	225	245	263	279	294	308	320	332	343	353	
35	245	216	191	169	149	132	116	101	88	75	64	53	43	33	24	15	35
		16	41	63	83	100	116	131	144	157	168	179	189	199	208	217	
40	188	169	152	136	122	109	97	85	74	64	55	45	37	29	21	13	40
			11	27	41	54	66	78	89	99	108	118	126	134	142	150	
45	154	140	127	115	104	93	83	73	64	56	48	40	32	25	18	12	45
				10	21	32	42	52	61	69	77	85	93	100	107	113	
50	131	120	109	99	90	81	73	65	57	49	42	35	29	23	17	11	50
						11	19	27	35	43	50	57	63	69	75	81	
55	114	105	96	88	80	72	65	58	51	44	38	32	26	20	15	10	55
							9	16	23	30	36	42	48	54	59	64	
60	101	93	86	79	72	65	58	52	46	40	35	29	24	19	14	9	60
								8	14	20	25	31	36	41	46	51	
70	83	77	71	65	59	54	49	44	39	34	29	25	20	16	12	8	70
									9	14	19	23	28	32	36	40	
80	70	65	60	55	51	46	42	38	33	29	25	22	18	14	10	7	80
									6	10	14	17	21	25	29	32	
90	61	57	52	48	44	41	37	33	29	26	22	19	16	12	9	6	90
										4	8	11	14	18	21	24	
100	54	50	47	43	40	36	33	30	26	23	20	17	14	11	8	5	100
											5	8	11	14	17	20	
110	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	16	13	10	8	5	110
												4	7	10	12	15	
120	44	41	38	35	32	30	27	24	22	19	17	14	12	9	7	5	120
													3	6	8	10	
130	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	18	15	13	11	9	6	4	130
															4	6	
140	37	34	32	30	27	25	23	21	19	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	140
															4	6	

*Based on USN Tables, Latest Rev.



US EPA NITROX I (32% O₂) DIVE TABLES *



DEPTH->	15	20	25	30	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	SURFACE INTERVAL TABLE									
EAD->	8	13	17	21	30	34	38	43	47	51	56	64	73	81	90	99	107										
A	57	36	26	20	17	14	12	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	4	3	->	->	->	->	->	->	->	A->	0:10 2:20	
B	101	60	43	33	27	23	20	17	15	14	12	10	9	7	7	6	6	->	->	->	->	->	->	B->	0:10 1:16 3:36		
C	158	88	61	47	38	32	27	24	21	19	17	14	12	11	11	9	8	->	->	->	->	->	C->	0:10 0:55 2:11 4:31			
D	245	121	82	62	50	42	36	31	28	25	22	19	16	14	14	12	11	->	->	->	->	D->	0:10 0:52 1:47 3:03 5:23				
E	426	163	106	78	62	52	44	39	34	31	28	23	20	17	17	15	14	->	->	->	E->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:39 3:55 6:15					
F		217	133	97	76	63	53	46	41	37	33	28	24	21	21	18	16	->	->	F->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:31 4:48 7:08						
G		297	165	117	91	74	63	55	48	43	39	32	28	24	24	21	19	->	G->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:23 5:40 8:00							
H		449	205	140	107	87	73	63	56	50	45	37	32	28	28	25	20	H->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:16 6:32 8:52								
I			256	166	125	100	84	72	63	56	51	42	36	30	30	->	I->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:08 7:24 9:44									
J			330	198	145	115	95	82	71	63	57	47	39	->	->	J->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 7:00 8:16 10:36										
K			461	236	167	131	108	92	80	71	60	48	->	->	K->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:59 7:53 9:10 11:29											
L				285	193	148	121	102	89	74	->	->	->	L->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:58 7:50 8:44 10:01 12:21												
M				354	223	168	135	114	92	->	->	->	M->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:58 7:50 8:42 9:37 10:53 13:13													
N				469	260	190	151	125	->	->	->	N->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:58 7:50 8:42 9:34 10:29 11:45 14:05														
O				595	307	215	163	->	->	->	O->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:58 7:50 8:42 9:34 10:27 11:21 12:37 14:58															
Z					371	232	->	->	->	Z->	0:10 0:52 1:44 2:37 3:29 4:21 5:13 6:06 6:58 7:50 8:42 9:34 10:27 11:19 12:13 13:30 15:50																

based on USN Equivalent Air Depth (EAD)

Z O N M L K J I H G F E D C B A



US EPA RESIDUAL NITROGEN TABLE FOR NITROX I*



US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

DEPTH	Z ⇓	O ⇓	N ⇓	M ⇓	L ⇓	K ⇓	J ⇓	I ⇓	H ⇓	G ⇓	F ⇓	E ⇓	D ⇓	C ⇓	B ⇓	A ⇓	DEPTH
15												427	246	159	101	58	15
									NO LIMIT								
20									450	298	218	164	122	89	61	37	20
									NO LIMIT								
25						462	331	257	206	166	134	106	83	62	44	27	25
									NO LIMIT								
30			470	354	286	237	198	167	141	118	98	79	63	48	34	21	30
			125	241	309	358	397	428	454	477	497	516	532	547	561	574	
40	372	308	261	224	194	168	146	126	108	92	77	63	51	39	28	18	40
		63	110	147	177	203	225	245	263	279	294	308	320	332	343	353	
45	245	216	191	169	149	132	116	101	88	75	64	53	43	33	24	15	45
		16	41	63	83	100	116	131	144	157	168	179	189	199	208	217	
50	188	169	152	136	122	109	97	85	74	64	55	45	37	29	21	13	50
			11	27	41	54	66	78	89	99	108	118	126	134	142	150	
55	154	140	127	115	104	93	83	73	64	56	48	40	32	25	18	12	55
				10	21	32	42	52	61	69	77	85	93	100	107	113	
60	131	120	109	99	90	81	73	65	57	49	42	35	29	23	17	11	60
						11	19	27	35	43	50	57	63	69	75	81	
65	114	105	96	88	80	72	65	58	51	44	38	32	26	20	15	10	65
							9	16	23	30	36	42	48	54	59	64	
70	101	93	86	79	72	65	58	52	46	40	35	29	24	19	14	9	70
								8	14	20	25	31	36	41	46	51	
80	83	77	71	65	59	54	49	44	39	34	29	25	20	16	12	8	80
									9	14	19	23	28	32	36	40	
90	70	65	60	55	51	46	42	38	33	29	25	22	18	14	10	7	90
									6	10	14	17	21	25	29	32	
100	61	57	52	48	44	41	37	33	29	26	22	19	16	12	9	6	100
										4	8	11	14	18	21	24	
110	61	57	52	48	44	41	37	33	29	26	22	19	16	12	9	6	110
										4	8	11	14	18	21	24	
120	54	50	47	43	40	36	33	30	26	23	20	17	14	11	8	5	120
											5	8	11	14	17	20	
130	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	16	13	10	8	5	130
												4	7	10	12	15	

*Based on USN Equivalent Air Depth (EAD)



USEPA NITROX II (36% O₂) DIVE TABLE*



TH->	20	25	30	35	40	50	55	60	70	75	80	90	100	110	SURFACE INTERVAL TABLE											
D->	10	14	18	22	26	34	38	42	50	54	59	67	75	83												
A	57	36	26	20	17	14	12	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	->	->	->	->	->	->	->	->	A->	0:10 2:20		
B	101	60	43	33	27	23	20	17	15	14	12	10	9	7	->	->	->	->	->	->	->	B->	0:10 1:16	1:17 3:36		
C	158	88	61	47	38	32	27	24	21	19	17	14	12	11	->	->	->	->	->	->	C->	0:10 0:55	0:56 2:11	2:12 4:31		
D	245	121	82	62	50	42	36	31	28	25	22	19	16	14	->	->	->	->	->	D->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:47	1:48 3:03	3:04 5:23		
E	426	163	106	78	62	52	44	39	34	31	28	23	20	17	->	->	->	->	E->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:39	2:40 3:55	3:56 6:15		
F		217	133	97	76	63	53	46	41	37	33	28	24	21	->	->	->	F->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:31	3:32 4:48	4:49 7:08		
G		297	165	117	91	74	63	55	48	43	39	32	28	24	->	->	G->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:23	4:24 5:40	5:41 8:00		
H		449	205	140	107	87	73	63	56	50	45	37	32	28	->	H->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:16	5:17 6:32	6:33 8:52		
I			256	166	125	100	84	72	63	56	51	42	36	30	I->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:08	6:09 7:24	7:25 9:44		
J			330	198	145	115	95	82	71	63	57	47	39	J->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 7:00	7:01 8:16	8:17 10:36		
K			461	236	167	131	108	92	80	71	60	48	K->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:52	7:53 9:09	9:10 11:29		
L				285	193	148	121	102	89	74		L->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:50	7:51 8:44	8:45 10:01	10:02 12:21		
M				354	223	168	135	114	92		M->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:50	7:51 8:42	8:43 9:37	9:38 10:53	10:54 13:13		
N				469	260	190	151	125		N->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:50	7:51 8:42	8:43 9:34	9:35 10:29	10:30 11:45	11:46 14:05		
O				595	307	215	163		O->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:50	7:51 8:42	8:43 9:34	9:35 10:27	10:28 11:21	11:22 12:37	12:38 14:58		
Z					371	232		Z->	0:10 0:52	0:53 1:44	1:45 2:37	2:38 3:29	3:30 4:21	4:22 5:13	5:14 6:06	6:07 6:58	6:59 7:50	7:51 8:42	8:43 9:34	9:35 10:27	10:28 11:19	11:20 12:13	12:14 13:30	13:31 15:50		

*Based on USN Equivalent Air Depth (EAD)

Z O N M L K J I H G F E D C B A



US EPA RESIDUAL NITROGEN TABLE FOR NITROX II*



US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

DEPTH	Z ⇓	O ⇓	N ⇓	M ⇓	L ⇓	K ⇓	J ⇓	I ⇓	H ⇓	G ⇓	F ⇓	E ⇓	D ⇓	C ⇓	B ⇓	A ⇓	DEPTH
20												427	246	159	101	58	20
									NO LIMIT								
25									450	298	218	164	122	89	61	37	25
									NO LIMIT								
30						462	331	257	206	166	134	106	83	62	44	27	30
									NO LIMIT								
35			470	354	286	237	198	167	141	118	98	79	63	48	34	21	35
			125	241	309	358	397	428	454	477	497	516	532	547	561	574	
40	372	308	261	224	194	168	146	126	108	92	77	63	51	39	28	18	40
		63	110	147	177	203	225	245	263	279	294	308	320	332	343	353	
50	245	216	191	169	149	132	116	101	88	75	64	53	43	33	24	15	50
		16	41	63	83	100	116	131	144	157	168	179	189	199	208	217	
55	188	169	152	136	122	109	97	85	74	64	55	45	37	29	21	13	55
			11	27	41	54	66	78	89	99	108	118	126	134	142	150	
60	154	140	127	115	104	93	83	73	64	56	48	40	32	25	18	12	60
				10	21	32	42	52	61	69	77	85	93	100	107	113	
70	131	120	109	99	90	81	73	65	57	49	42	35	29	23	17	11	70
						11	19	27	35	43	50	57	63	69	75	81	
75	114	105	96	88	80	72	65	58	51	44	38	32	26	20	15	10	75
							9	16	23	30	36	42	48	54	59	64	
80	101	93	86	79	72	65	58	52	46	40	35	29	24	19	14	9	80
								8	14	20	25	31	36	41	46	51	
90	83	77	71	65	59	54	49	44	39	34	29	25	20	16	12	8	90
								9	14	19	23	28	32	36	40		
100	70	65	60	55	51	46	42	38	33	29	25	22	18	14	10	7	100
									6	10	14	17	21	25	29	32	
110	61	57	52	48	44	41	37	33	29	26	22	19	16	12	9	6	110
										4	8	11	14	18	21	24	

*Based on USN Equivalent Air Depth (EAD)



US EPA MAX DEPTH/PPO TABLE



%O ₂	DEPTH @ 1.6	DEPTH @ 1.5	DEPTH @ 1.4	DEPTH @ 1.3	DEPTH @ 1.2	DEPTH @ 1.1	DEPTH @ 1.0
21	218	203	187	171	156	140	124
22	207	192	177	162	147	132	117
23	197	182	168	154	139	125	110
24	187	173	160	146	132	118	105
25	178	165	152	139	125	112	99
26	170	157	145	132	119	107	94
27	163	150	138	126	114	101	89
28	156	144	132	120	108	97	85
29	149	138	126	115	104	92	81
30	143	132	121	110	99	88	77
31	137	127	116	105	95	84	73
32	132	122	111	101	91	80	70
33	127	117	107	97	87	77	67
34	122	113	103	93	83	74	64
35	118	108	99	90	80	71	61
36	114	105	95	86	77	68	59
37	110	101	92	83	74	65	56
38	106	97	89	80	71	63	54
39	102	94	85	77	69	60	52
40	99	91	83	74	66	58	50

NOAA NITROX I (32% Oxygen; 68% Nitrogen) No-Decompression Tables

Normal Depth Limit: 130 feet of seawater.

(Does not include changes that may be provided in the 2001 revision of the NOAA Diving Manual.)

Depth		No-Decompression Limits (min)	Group Designation														
ft.	m.		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
15	4.6		60	120	210	300											
20	6.1		35	70	110	160	225	350									
25	7.6		25	50	75	100	135	180	240	325							
30	9.1		20	35	55	75	95	120	160	195	245	315					
40	12.2		15	30	45	60	75	95	120	145	170	205	250	310			
45	13.7	310	5	15	25	40	50	60	80	100	120	140	160	190	220	270	310
50	15.2	200	5	15	25	30	40	50	70	80	100	110	130	150	170	200	
60	18.2	100		10	15	25	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100			
70	21.3	60		10	15	20	25	30	40	50	55	60					
80	24.3	50		5	10	15	20	30	35	40	45	50					
90	27.4	40		5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40						
100	30.5	30		5	10	12	15	20	25	30							
110	33.5	25		5	7	10	15	20	22	25							
120	36.6	25		5	7	10	15	20	22	25							
130	39.6	20			5	10	13	15	20								
140	42.7	15			5	10	12	15									
150	45.7	10			5	8	10										

Ascent Rate. Always ascend at a rate of ascent 30 feet per minute (20 seconds per 10 fsw). Minor variations in the rate of travel between 20 and 40 fsw/minute are acceptable.

Flying After Diving. Wait a minimum surface interval of 12 hours prior to flying after diving. When making daily, multiple dives for several days or making a dive requiring an emergency decompression stop, extend the surface interval beyond twelve hours. Whenever possible wait 24 hours before flying.

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Residual Nitrogen Timetable for NOAA Nitrox I (68% N₂, 32% O₂) Dives

(Does not include changes that may be provided in the 2001 revision of the NOAA Diving Manual.)

Locate repetitive group designation from dive along the diagonal.

Next read vertically downward to the new repetitive group designation. Continue downward in this same column to the row which represents the depth of the repetitive (next) dive. The time given at the intersection is residual nitrogen time, in minutes, to be applied to the repetitive dive.

* Dives following surface intervals of more than 12 hours are not repetitive dives. Use a actual bottom times in the Standard Air Decompression Tables to compute decompression for such dives.

** If no residual nitrogen time is given, then the repetitive group does not change.

Changes based on Navy Experimental Diving Unit (NEDU) Report 13-83

		INTERVAL															
		SURFACE															
Repetitive Dive Depth (ft.)		THE															
		OF															
		BEGINNING															
		AT															
		GROUP															
		REPETITIVE															
		Z															
		O															
		N															
		M															
		L															
		K															
		J															
		I															
		H															
		G															
		F															
		E															
		D															
		C															
		B															
		A															
		NEW GROUP DESIGNATION															
50		257	241	213	187	161	138	116	101	87	73	61	49	37	25	17	7
60		169	160	142	124	111	99	87	76	66	56	47	38	29	21	13	6
70		122	117	107	97	88	79	70	61	52	44	36	30	24	17	11	5
80		100	96	87	80	72	64	57	50	43	37	31	26	20	15	9	4
90		84	80	73	68	61	54	48	43	38	32	28	23	18	13	8	4
100		73	70	64	58	53	47	43	38	33	29	24	20	16	11	7	3
110		64	62	57	52	48	43	38	34	30	26	22	18	14	10	7	3
120		64	62	57	52	48	43	38	34	30	26	22	18	14	10	7	3
130		57	55	51	47	42	38	34	31	27	24	20	16	13	10	6	3
140		52	50	46	43	39	35	32	28	25	21	18	15	12	9	6	3
150		46	44	40	38	35	31	28	25	22	19	16	13	11	8	6	3

**Residual Nitrogen Times (Minutes)
for NOAA Nitrox I (68% N₂, 32% O₂)**

APPENDIX C

EPA Medical Evaluation Form

DIVER EXAM

**EPA Medical Evaluation Form
National Occupational Medical Surveillance Program**

EMPLOYEE TO COMPLETE ALL SHADED AREAS OF FORM BEFORE APPOINTMENT.

Health Center – Attach COPY of screening, diagnostic, and laboratory tests and a COPY of this form for final medical review. Retain all originals in employee file.

(Employee to complete)		HEALTH CENTER STAMP
Client Name: _____ SHEMP Manager: _____		*Periodicity of exams a. Conducted annually if: 1. Over age 40 2. Known significant medical problem 3. Hazmat team member 4. Engaged in field or lab activity > 30 days per year 5. Exposure to substance mandating annual medical surveillance b. All other exams conducted every other year
Client's Home Address: _____		
Client's Employer: _____ USEPA _____		
Employer's Address: _____		
Provider Name(s): _____		
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (Employee to complete)		
Name _____	Position Title: Diver	Work Phone #:
SS# (last four digits only):	Date of Birth:	Sex:
Date of Testing:	Supervisor Name:	Supervisor Work Phone #:
PROVIDERS PLEASE NOTE -- CORE EXAM MUST ALWAYS BE COMPLETED		
<p align="center">BASELINE/EXIT CORE EXAM* OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH EVALUATION (Nurse to complete)</p> <p><u>Required services:</u> (Check when test performed) FOH Profile, Blood and Urine Audiometry EKG Spirometry Vision Screening Chest X-Ray - PA General Physical Examination General Medical History</p> <p><u>If indicated services:</u> (Check when test performed) Stress EKG (every 2 years) Tetanus Immunization (every 10 years) Other Immunizations (see Work Order)</p>	<p align="center">PERIODIC CORE EXAM * OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH EVALUATION (Nurse to complete)</p> <p><u>Required services:</u> (Check when test performed) FOH Profile, Blood and Urine Vision Screening Audiometry General Physical Examination General Medical History Spirometry (for Respirator Certification)</p> <p><u>If indicated services:</u> (Check when test performed) EKG (initially, at age 40, every 5 years thereafter) Stress EKG (per MRO only) Tetanus Immunization (every 10 years) Other Immunizations _____ Chest X-Ray - PA (initially, when medically indicated, at exit) Spirometry (if indicated)</p>	<p align="center">MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE – SPECIAL PROFILES (Employee check all that apply) (Nurse to complete testing as indicated on page 2)</p> <p>✓ EPA Diver Lab Employee Clean Air Inspector/Enforcement Officer FIFRA Enforcement Officer Pesticide Laboratory Employee Emergency Response and On-Scene Coordinator Animal Handler Field Sampling Employee Remedial Project Officer TSCA Enforcement Officer RCRA Enforcement Officer NESHAPS/AHERA (Asbestos Enforcement Officer) Wetlands Employee Radiation Employee U.S.T. Inspector NPDES Inspector Other</p>

* This examination does not substitute for a periodic health examination conducted by your private provider. It is being conducted for occupational purposes.

SPECIALTY EXAMINATIONS
(Nurse to complete)

✓ **EPA Diver W107042/W114113**

- Baseline/Exit Exam**
 - Respirator Clearance
- Periodic Exam W109457**
 - EKG (annually after age 25)
 - Chest X-Ray PA and Lat View (every 2 years after age 40)
 - Respirator Clearance
 - If diver will be participating in NOAA diving program, then complete SF 88 and 93 and attach to this exam.
 - Wrist size measured (Measure in inches with cloth tape over "two knobs" above hand.)

Pesticide Laboratory Employee

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107053/W109460**
 - Blood Lead
 - Urine Heavy Metals
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance
- Periodic Exam W109459**
 - RBC Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance

Remedial Project Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107046/W114093**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Blood Lead
 - Respirator Clearance
- Periodic Exam W114094**
 - Blood Lead
 - Respirator Clearance (if indicated)

NESHAPS/AHERA—Asbestos Enforcement Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107045/W109464**
 - B-Reading and Chest X-Ray
 - Respirator Clearance
 - FOH-7 Form
- Periodic Exam W109463**
 - Chest X-Ray PA View
 - B Read
 - FOH-8 Form
 - Respirator Clearance

U.S.T. Inspector

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Core Component Only
- Periodic Exam**
 - Core Component Only **W114086**

Lab Employee

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107041/W109470**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Blood Lead
 - Serum PCB
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency team)
 - Urine Heavy Metal
- Periodic Exam W109469**
 - Blood Lead
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency team)

Emergency Response and On-Scene Coordinator

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107044/W109472**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance
 - Blood Lead
 - Exercise Stress Test
 - Immunizations
 - Write prescription for antibiotic prophylaxis (to be held by SHEMP Manager) (see Work Order)
- Periodic Exam W109471**
 - Blood Lead
 - Respirator Clearance
 - RBC Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Exercise Stress Test (at least once every 2 years)
 - Services to maintain immunization (see Work Order/RMO)
 - Write prescription for antibiotic prophylaxis (to be held by SHEMP Manager) (see Work Order)

TSCA Enforcement Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W114095/W114096**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Blood Lead
 - Serum PCB
 - Respirator Clearance
- Periodic Exam W114097**
 - Core Component Only

Wetlands Employee

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Lyme Titer, IgG Only
- Periodic Exam W114086**
 - Core Component Only

NPDES Inspector

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Core Component Only
- Periodic Exam W114086**
 - Core Component Only

Clean Air Inspector/Enforcement Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107051/W114088**
 - Blood Lead
- Periodic Exam W114087**
 - Blood Lead

FIFRA Enforcement Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W114089/W114091**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
- Periodic Exam W114092**
 - RBC Cholinesterase **W115008**

Field Sampling Employee

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107047/W109480**
 - Blood Lead
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance
- Periodic Exam W109479**
 - Blood Lead
 - Respirator Clearance

RCRA Enforcement Officer

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107052/W109482**
 - RBC and Serum Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency response team)
 - Blood Lead
- Periodic Exam W109481**
 - RBC Cholinesterase **W115008**
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency response team)

Radiation Employee

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency response team or as needed)
- Periodic Exam W114086**
 - Respirator Clearance (if on emergency response team or as needed)

Animal Handler

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Follow CDC recommendations for immunization
- Periodic Exam W114086**
 - Follow CDC recommendations for immunization

Other

- Baseline/Exit Exam W107050/W114085**
 - Core Component Only
- Periodic Exam W114086**
 - Core Component Only

Client Name: _____

Date: _____

Page 2 of 10

DIVER EXAM

MEDICAL HISTORY (Employee to complete all on this page)		Client Name _____																															
WELLNESS/HEALTH PROFILE Smoking History This information is needed since smoking increases your risk for lung cancer and several other types of cancer, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asbestos-related lung diseases, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. Please check your smoking status and complete that section: Never Smoked Current Smoker Number of cigarettes per day _____ Number of cigars per day _____ Number of pipe bowls per day _____ Total years you have smoked _____ Former Smoker Number of cigarettes per day _____ Number of cigars per day _____ Number of pipe bowls per day _____ Total years you smoked _____ Chronic exposure to environmental tobacco smoke Alcohol/Drug Use What is your average alcohol consumption in a week? _____ drinks (1 drink = 12 oz. beer, 1 glass wine, or 1.5 oz liquor) How often do you drink alcohol? Weekdays Weekends Both Do you use recreational drugs? Currently Previously Never	RESPIRATOR CLEARANCE QUESTIONS My position does not require the use of a respirator (if selected, DO NOT complete questions below) (NO PERIODIC SPIROMETRY IF THIS CHOICE INDICATED, ONLY BASELINE AND EXIT) My position may require the use of a respirator (if selected, DO complete questions below) (PERFORM SPIROMETRY IF THIS CHOICE INDICATED) What type of respirator do/will you use? Cartridge Air supply SCBA How often do you use a respirator? Daily Weekly Monthly <two times a year Effort while using respirator? Light Moderate Heavy Hazards present during use? High altitude Temperature extremes Confined spaces Have you ever had or do you now have any of the following? Please check all that apply and use the space below to comment on positive responses. <table style="width:100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Persistent cough</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heart trouble</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shortness of breath</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>History of fainting or seizures</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fear of tight or enclosed spaces</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sensation of smothering</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heat exhaustion or heat stroke</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contact lenses or eyeglasses</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other conditions that might interfere with respirator use or result in limited work activity</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> Client comments regarding positive responses to respirator clearance questions: _____		Yes	No	Persistent cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart trouble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	History of fainting or seizures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fear of tight or enclosed spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensation of smothering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heat exhaustion or heat stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact lenses or eyeglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other conditions that might interfere with respirator use or result in limited work activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	U.S. EPA DIVER QUESTIONS List type or types of breathing apparatus/regulators used while diving: _____ Level of work effort (circle one): Light Moderate Heavy Strenuous Extent of usage: On a daily basis Occasionally, but more than once a week Rarely, or for emergency situations only Length of time of anticipated effort in hours: _____ Special work considerations (i.e., extra cold water, polluted water, deep diving, etc.): _____ DIVING HISTORY How many dives (wet) do you perform per year (on average)? _____ How many chamber dives per year? _____ How deep do you dive, on average? _____ Do you perform moderate or heavy physical labor at depth? Never Rarely Sometimes Usually Always History of: Decompression sickness _____ Arterial gas embolism _____ Ear barotrauma _____ Pulmonary barotrauma _____ Marine envenomation _____ Disease from exposure to cold, heat _____ Have you ever been restricted in your diving duties due to a medical condition? Yes No If yes, explain: _____ Have you ever required hyperbaric oxygen therapy? Yes No If yes, explain: _____	
	Yes	No																															
Persistent cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Heart trouble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
History of fainting or seizures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Fear of tight or enclosed spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Sensation of smothering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Heat exhaustion or heat stroke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Contact lenses or eyeglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
Other conditions that might interfere with respirator use or result in limited work activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																															
ANIMAL HANDLER QUESTIONS List type of occupational animal exposure: <input type="checkbox"/> Non-human primates and their tissue/fluid <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant mammals (non-rodents) <input type="checkbox"/> Venomous animals (including snakes) <input type="checkbox"/> Wild-caught mammals and birds <input type="checkbox"/> Bats <input type="checkbox"/> Birds <input type="checkbox"/> Standard lab animals (usual EPA exposure = mice, rats, rabbits, dogs, cats, pigs, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Other species _____ Animal handler medical history concerns: <input type="checkbox"/> Known allergies or suspected allergies to animals <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic health problems such as diabetes <input type="checkbox"/> Serious renal or liver disease <input type="checkbox"/> Valvular heart disease <input type="checkbox"/> Immune system deficiencies or other limitations to your ability to fight off disease <input type="checkbox"/> Current therapy with high dose steroids, radiation therapy or cancer therapies <input type="checkbox"/> History of problems with your spleen or absence of spleen <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant or planning to get pregnant? Exposure to animals outside the workplace. If yes, please describe: _____	ANIMAL HANDLER OCCUPATIONAL CONCERNS: <input type="checkbox"/> Is animal husbandry an essential part of your duties (i.e. provide food/water, clean cages, groom animals, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> What % of your day are you in direct contact with animals or their blood, tissues, fluids? ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Does your work require you to use infectious agents in animals? ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Since your last exam have you experienced any of the following in relation to your animal exposure duties: o Sneezing and runny nose o Skin eruptions including hives o Cough o Chest tightness o Wheezing o Shortness of breath	MENTAL HEALTH Yes No Current psychological/psychiatric condition Depression History of psychosis Poor adaptation to stress Anxiety or phobia disorder Panic attacks, hyperventilation Uncontrollable rage Claustrophobia Diagnosed personality disorder or neuroses																															
OBSTETRIC Yes No Are you currently pregnant? _____	DERMATOLOGY Yes No Sun sensitivity Allergic dermatitis to rubber History of chronic dermatitis Active skin disease Moles that change in size or color IMMUNOLOGY/ALLERGY Yes No Allergies Which one(s) (including antibiotics)? _____	ENDOCRINE Yes No Diabetes (requiring insulin) Diabetes (not requiring insulin) Childhood onset diabetes Thyroid disease Obesity Unexplained weight loss or gain																															

Client Name: _____

Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

MEDICAL HISTORY (Employee to complete all below)			DIAGNOSTIC AND PHYSICAL FINDINGS (Examining physician to complete)		
MUSCULOSKELETAL			Normal	Abnormal	Comments/findings:
Yes No Moderate to severe arthritis, tendonitis Amputations Loss of use of arm or leg Aseptic bone necrosis Chronic back pain (back pain associated with neurological deficit)				Upper extremities (strength) Upper extremities (range of motion) Lower extremities (strength) Lower extremities (range of motion)	
NEUROLOGICAL			Normal	Abnormal	Comments/findings:
Yes No Any neurological disease Seizures Spinal cord injury Numbness or tingling Head/spine surgery History of head trauma with persistent deficits Chronic recurring headaches (migraine) Brain tumor Loss of memory Insomnia (difficulty sleeping)				Cranial nerves Cerebellum Motor/sensory Deep tendon reflexes Mental status exam	
GASTROINTESTINAL			Normal	Abnormal	Comments/findings:
Yes No Esophageal diverticula Severe reflux Hiatal hernia Gas bloat syndrome Gastric outlet obstruction Ileostomy obstruction Diverticulitis Hernias Fistulae Colostomy Hepatitis Active ulcer disease Irritable bowel syndrome Rectal bleeding Vomiting blood				Auscultation Palpation Organo-megaly Tenderness Inguinal hernia	
GENITOURINARY			Normal	Abnormal	Comments/findings:
Yes No Blood in urine Difficult or painful urination Infertility (difficulty having children)				Urogenital exam	

Client Name: _____ Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

MEDICAL HISTORY (Employee to complete)	DIAGNOSTIC AND PHYSICAL FINDINGS (Nurse or physician to complete as indicated)																															
<p>VISION Yes No</p> <p>Frequent headaches? Blurred vision? Difficulty reading? Eye disease? Eyeglasses? Contact lenses? Radial keratotomy? Cataracts? Color blindness?</p>	<p>HEAD AND NECK (Examining physician to complete)</p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p>Head, face, neck (thyroid), scalp Nose/sinuses Mouth/throat Pupils equal/reactive Ocular motility Ophthalmoscopic findings</p> <p>Comments/findings: _____ _____</p>				<p>VISION (Nurse to complete)</p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Color vision</p> <p><u>Type of test</u> Ishihara plate Function test (<i>Yarn, colors in room</i>) Other (specify: _____)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Best corrected or native vision (Snellen Units)</u></p> <p>Both Fr 20/____ Right Fr 20/____ Left Fr 20/____ Both Nr 20/____ Right Nr 20/____ Left Nr 20/____</p>																											
<p>HEARING Yes No</p> <p>Loud, constant noise or music in the past 14 hours? Loud, impact noise in the past 14 hours? Ringing in the ears? Difficulty hearing? Ear infections or cold in the past 2 weeks? Dizziness or balance problems? Are you in a Hearing Conservation Program? Do you use protective hearing equipment?</p> <p>If yes, type: foam pre-mold/plugs ear muffs Yes No</p> <p>Have you had prior military service? Have you had prior ear surgery? Have you had an eardrum rupture? Have you had recurrent ear infections? Do you wear a hearing aid?</p>	<p>EARS (Examining physician to complete)</p> <table style="width:100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width:50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Left</u></p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Canal/external ear Tympanic membrane</p> </td> <td style="width:50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Right</u></p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Canal/external ear Tympanic membrane</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Comments/findings: _____ _____ _____</p>								<p><u>Left</u></p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Canal/external ear Tympanic membrane</p>	<p><u>Right</u></p> <p>Normal Abnormal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Canal/external ear Tympanic membrane</p>																						
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<p>CANCER Yes No</p> <p>Comments: _____ _____</p>	<p>HEARING (Nurse to complete)</p> <p>Audiogram: Baseline Annual Termination (Attach current and baseline audiogram)</p> <p>Calibration Method: Oscar Biological Date _____</p> <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width:15%;">Frequency</th> <th style="width:10%;">500Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">1000Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">2000Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">3000Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">4000Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">6000Hz</th> <th style="width:10%;">8000Hz</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Left ear</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Right ear</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Review/compare with baseline: Change No change</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Normal Abnormal Explain:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>								Frequency	500Hz	1000Hz	2000Hz	3000Hz	4000Hz	6000Hz	8000Hz	Left ear								Right ear							
Frequency	500Hz	1000Hz	2000Hz	3000Hz	4000Hz	6000Hz	8000Hz																									
Left ear																																
Right ear																																

Client Name: _____ Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

Occupational History

(Employee to complete entire page, please indicate N/A where applicable)

Div./Br./Sec. _____ Duration of employment with U.S. EPA: _____

Description of duties: _____

Exposures (dusts, fumes, vapors, gases, chemicals, radiation, noise, vibration, repetitive movements, temp. extremes): _____

Adverse health effects possibly related to job: _____

Other work performed (moonlighting, hobbies, other positions): _____

Any other exposures to hazardous material? Yes No If yes, explain: _____

How long have you been doing this type of work? ____ years

Have you ever been off work more than a day because of work-related illness or injury? Yes No

If yes, please specify: _____

Have you ever changed jobs or duties due to health problems? Yes No

If yes, please specify: _____

If this is your first EPA medical surveillance exam, list any previous jobs with associated hazards, starting with the one before your current position:

Agency/Company	Dates of Employment	Job Duties	Specific Hazards
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Functional Activities (current position): Heavy lifting/carrying (40 lbs or more) Walking ____hrs/day Standing ____hrs/day Climbing Operation of a motor vehicle

PLEASE INDICATE BELOW USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

LEVEL A – SCBA, FULLY ENCAPSULATED SUIT, CHEMICAL RESISTANT GLOVES AND BOOTS

LEVEL B – SCBA, CHEMICAL RESISTANT CLOTHING, CHEMICAL RESISTANT GLOVES AND BOOTS

LEVEL C – AIR PURIFYING RESPIRATOR, CHEMICAL RESISTANT CLOTHING

LEVEL D – COVERALLS, SAFETY BOOTS, GOGGLES

<input type="checkbox"/> Level A PPE	<input type="checkbox"/> Level B PPE	<input type="checkbox"/> Level C PPE	<input type="checkbox"/> Level D PPE
Extent of usage: <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	Extent of usage: <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	Extent of usage: <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely	Extent of usage: <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely

Additional activities/comments: _____

PLEASE INDICATE LAB AND FIELDWORK (If 0 days, use N/A)

% of time in field/lab: _____ Fieldwork, approximate number of days per year: _____ Lab work, approximate number of days per year: _____

Environmental factors (past 2 years):

Biological agents	Solvents	Hot temperatures	Heavy metals	Asbestos	Dust	Pesticides
Fumes, smoke, gases	Radiation	Excessive noise	Confined space entry	Sewage	Cold temperatures	

Additional factors/comments: _____

Client Name: _____

Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

Exposure History (current position) (Employee to complete this page if applicable)

Describe your work experience at major EPA work sites (up to six) during the past year.

SITE	DATE	SPECIFIC CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL FACTORS	*EXPOSURE LEVEL	LEVEL OF PPE	SYMPTOMS FROM EXPOSURE	JOB DUTIES

***Exposure Levels: Include both frequency of exposure (number of days) and duration of exposure (hours per day)**

Client Name: _____

Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

<p>Examining physician, please check all the topics you discussed during the diagnostic work-up/physical examination.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diet <input type="checkbox"/> Low-calorie <input type="checkbox"/> Low-fat <input type="checkbox"/> Low-salt</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cholesterol</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hypertension</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exercise</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Obesity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Smoking cessation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Respirator use</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Avoid sun exposure/sun screen</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol use</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cancer screening</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Immunizations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hearing protection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Vision referral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other personal protective equipment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Job stressors</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referral(s)</p> <p>Others: _____ _____</p>	<p>WORKPLACE EXPOSURE MONITORING (Examining physician to complete)</p> <p>Is workplace monitoring data or other exposure data for this employee or this position available for review? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, what type of data are available? _____</p> <p>Acute exposure data <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace monitoring data <input type="checkbox"/> Individual dosimetry data <input type="checkbox"/> MSDS</p> <p>Periodic exposure data <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace monitoring data <input type="checkbox"/> Individual dosimetry data <input type="checkbox"/> MSDS</p> <p>How were data made available? <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic database <input type="checkbox"/> Hard copy report <input type="checkbox"/> Employee self-report</p> <p>Please explain what changes, if any, were made in the examination due to review of these data: _____</p> <p>Based on your knowledge of the physical demands of the position and/or the potential exposure to occupational hazards, please answer the following: Does the employee need to continue in a medical surveillance program? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot determine based on information available <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>	<p>SUMMARY OR ABNORMAL FINDINGS SUMMARY WITH PLAN OF ACTION (Examining physician to complete)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The employee has been medically examined by me under the provisions of the EPA National Occupational Medical Surveillance Program and has been advised of the examination findings.</p> <p>The employee is:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fully capable of participating in all job functions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medically cleared for unrestricted respirator use</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medically cleared for use of all other suitable protective equipment (chemically resistant clothing, face shield, glasses, gloves, earmuffs/plugs)</p> <p>If any of the above have not been selected, please explain why in detail below:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Note: Please do not provide any official statement (oral or written) concerning the examinee's fitness or capability to perform the duties of any occupation. The Medical Review Officer will provide written opinions to the agency.</p>
SIGNATURES		DATE PHYSICAL COMPLETED

I have had the examination findings explained to me and received a copy of the examination if requested. I understand the medical recommendations.

Client _____

Nurse _____

Examining Physician _____

Client Name: _____ Date: _____

DIVER EXAM

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
MEDICAL CLEARANCE STATEMENT
NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM**

TYPE OF EXAM:
(Nurse to complete)
 BASELINE
 PERIODIC
 EXIT **DIVER (160)**

(Nurse to complete)

Name of Client: _____

SSN (last four digits only): _____

Organization/Facility Designator: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Supervisor Phone: _____

(Nurse to complete)

Health Center Site Code: _____

Complete Mailing Address: _____

Health Center Phone and Fax _____

SHEMP Manager Name _____

Complete Mailing Address _____

Lab Employee (060)
Clean Air Inspector/
Enforcement Officer (040)
FIFRA Enforcement Officer
(050)
Pesticide Lab Employee (010)
Emergency Response & On-
Scene Coordinator (020)
Field Sampling Employee (030)
Remedial Project Officer (100)
TSCA Enforcement Officer
(110)
RCRA Enforcement Officer
(110)
NESHAPS/AHERA (Asbestos
Enforcement Officer) (070)
Wetlands Employee (130)
Radiation Employee (090)
U.S.T. Inspector (120)
NPDES Inspector (080)
Animal Handler
Other (150)

Medical Clearance Statement [To be completed by Medical Review Officer only]

The above-named EPA employee has been medically examined under the provisions of the EPA National Occupational Medical Surveillance Program and has been advised of the examination findings.

I have reviewed the Employee medical history, physical examination findings, and diagnostic tests.
In my opinion, this employee:

- Is medically qualified to participate in the essential functions of this position and wear all suitable respiratory protective equipment (levels A, B, C, and D).**
- Is medically qualified to wear only the indicated respiratory equipment:

Negative pressure respirator	PAPR respirator	SCBA-type respirator	Air-line respirator
------------------------------	-----------------	----------------------	---------------------

The employee should not wear a respirator when experiencing reactive airways disease
- Is medically qualified to participate in the essential functions of this position, but is not medically qualified to wear respiratory protective equipment (level D only).
- Is medically qualified to participate in EPA office and/or laboratory activities, but not field activities.
- Reported no need to use respiratory protective equipment for this position.
- Is qualified to participate in EPA field and laboratory activities with the following restrictions:
 - The employee demonstrated hearing loss. Supervisors should be aware of this impairment. The employee should avoid, whenever feasible, all hazardous noise exposures. When avoidance is not feasible he/she should wear appropriate hearing protective equipment.
 - The employee's near and/or far vision was deficient. The employee is advised to review this with his/her regular eye doctor.
 - The employee's lab results were significantly abnormal. The employee is advised to review these abnormalities with his/her regular physician.
 - The employee's RBC cholinesterase and/or serum cholinesterase was reported as abnormal but is not clinically significant and requires no further action.
 - The employee's blood pressure was significantly elevated. The employee is restricted to work activities requiring only mild or moderate exertion. This restriction can be removed by the FOH Health Center when the employee has documented three serial blood pressure readings <160/95.
- A medical recommendation cannot be made at this time. Further medical evaluation, as described below, is needed:
- Is not medically qualified at this time for this position.
- Is medically qualified for all EPA diving-related duties and use of breathing apparatuses.**
- A prescription for antibiotics was signed by the examining physician and sent to the employee's SHEMP Manager.

The following occupationally-related medical findings were noted during this evaluation: _____

My recommendations, if any, include: _____

Schedule next exam in: One Year Two Years Exit exam (no further exams will be scheduled)

Reviewing Physician's Signature: _____ Date Medical Review Completed: _____

Reviewing Physician's Printed Name: _____

APPENDIX D

Non-EPA Diver

Liability Release and Express Assumption of Risk

&

**Recreational Scuba Training Council
Medical Statement & Guidelines**



EPA

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

LIABILITY RELEASE AND EXPRESS ASSUMPTION OF RISK

This is a release of your rights to sue. This release may be used against you in a court of law if you sue any release party or person.

Please read carefully, fill in all blanks and initial each paragraph before signing.

I, (PRINT NAME): _____, currently certified to scuba dive by

(PRINT AGENCY) _____ as provided by assigned certification number (PRINT Certification Number)

_____, hereby affirm that I have been advised and thoroughly informed of the inherent hazards of skin and scuba diving.

_____ Further, I understand that diving with compressed air involves inherent risks, including but not limited to: decompression sickness, embolism, or other hyperbaric injuries which may occur that require treatment in a recompression chamber. I further understand that the diving activities which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency engages in from time to time, may be conducted at a site that is remote, either by time or distance or both, from a recompression chamber, and nonetheless agree to proceed with the diving activity in spite of the possible absence of a recompression chamber in proximity to the site.

_____ I understand and agree that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and its employees, nor any duly appointed staff or crew member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or property owner of the site dived, (hereinafter referred to as "Released Party"), may be held liable or responsible in any way for any injury, death, or other damages to me or my family, heirs, or assigns that may occur as a result of my participation in this diving activity or as a result of any cause including the negligence of any party, including the Released Party, whether active or passive.

_____ In consideration of being allowed to participate in this diving activity, I agree to dive within the dive guidelines defined by the "US Environmental Protection Agency Statement of Understanding". I hereby personally assume all risks in connection with said activity, for any harm, injury, or damage that may befall me while I am engaged in this activity, including all risks connected therewith, whether foreseen or unforeseen. I understand this Liability Release and Assumption of Risk (Release) hereby encompasses and applies to all diving activities in which I choose to participate as part of the US EPA diving activities. These may include, but are not limited to activities which may be considered specialty diving activities such as: navigation, night, deep, altitude, boat, drift, dry suit, wreck or other overhead environment, underwater naturalist, and underwater photography.

_____ I further save and hold harmless any and all Released Parties from any claim or law suit by me, my family, estate, heirs, or assigns, arising out of my association with, and participation in this U.S. Environmental Protection Agency diving activity.

_____ I also understand that skin diving and scuba diving are physically strenuous activities and that I will be exerting myself during such activity, and that if I am injured as a result of a heart attack, panic hyperventilation, etc., that I expressly assume the risk of said injuries and that I will not hold the above listed Released Parties responsible for the same.

_____ I also understand that diving from a boat poses additional hazards such as slippery boat decks and shoelines and movement caused by wave action could cause me to lose my footing, fall and/or be injured, especially while carrying or wearing SCUBA equipment. In consideration of being allowed to participate in this diving activity, I hereby personally assume all risks in connection with getting to and from said activity, for any harm, injury, or damage that may befall me while I am engaged in such activity, including all risks connected with traveling to and from the dive site, whether foreseen or unseen.

_____ I further state that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign the liability and release, or that I have acquired the written consent of my parent or guardian as provided below.

_____ I hereby state and agree that this Release will be effective and valid for all specialized diving activities as defined above for a period of one year from the initial date on which I execute this Release.

_____ I understand that the terms herein are contractual and are not a mere recital, and that I have signed this document of my own free act.

SPECIAL OXYGEN ENRICHED AIR (NITROX) CONSIDERATION, IF APPLICABLE

_____ I understand that diving with oxygen enriched air involves certain inherent risks of oxygen toxicity and/or improper mixtures of breathing gas. I agree to assume all risks associated with breathing oxygen enriched air under hyperbaric conditions and agree to personally determine the oxygen content of my breathing gas and plan the dive accordingly to include a maximum depth and time.

IT IS THE INTENTION OF (PRINT NAME) _____ BY THIS INSTRUMENT TO EXEMPT AND RELEASE THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND ANY PROPERTY OWNER IMMEDIATELY ASSOCIATED WITH ACCESSING THE DIVING ACTIVITY, ANY DULY APPOINTED STAFF OR CREW MEMBER, AND ALL RELATED ENTITIES AS DEFINED ABOVE FROM ALL LIABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY WHATSOEVER FOR PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE OR WRONGFUL DEATH HOWEVER CAUSED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES, WHETHER PASSIVE OR ACTIVE.

I HAVE FULLY INFORMED MYSELF OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS LIABILITY RELEASE AND EXPRESS ASSUMPTION OF RISK BY READING IT BEFORE I SIGNED IT ON BEHALF OF MYSELF AND MY HEIRS. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT THIS RELEASE IS EFFECTIVE AND VALID FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FROM THE DATE ON WHICH I EXECUTE THIS RELEASE.

Your Signature Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian (where Applicable) Date

Signature of Witness Date

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
DIVING SAFETY MANUAL
(Revision 1.2, September 2010)

MEDICAL STATEMENT for SCUBA Diving

Participant Record (Confidential information)

Please read carefully before signing.

This is a statement in which you are informed of some potential risks involved in scuba diving and of the conduct required of you during any supervised scuba diving activity. Your signature on this statement is required for you to participate in the scuba diving activity sponsored by the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**, a U. S. federal government agency. The diving activity is **operated under the Agency's Office of Administration and Resources Management; Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Division in Washington, D.C.**

Read and discuss this statement prior to signing it. You must complete this Medical Statement, which includes the medical-history section, to participate in any EPA scuba diving activity. If you are a minor, you must have this Statement signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Diving is an exciting and demanding activity. When performed correctly, applying correct techniques, it is very safe. When established safety procedures are not followed, however, there are dangers.

To scuba dive safely, you must not be extremely overweight or out of condition. Diving can be strenuous under certain conditions. Your respiratory and circulatory systems must be in good health. All body air spaces must be normal and healthy. A person with heart trouble, a current cold or congestion, epilepsy, asthma, a severe medical problem, or who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs should not dive. If taking medication, consult your doctor and the diving supervisor before participation in this activity. You are also advised to thoroughly understand the important safety rules regarding breathing and equalization while scuba diving. Improper use of scuba equipment can result in serious injury. You must be thoroughly instructed in its use under the direct supervision of a qualified individual to use it safely.

If you have any additional questions regarding this Medical Statement or the Medical History section, review them with the diving supervisor before signing.

MEDICAL HISTORY

To the Participant:

The purpose of this medical questionnaire is to find out if you should be examined by your doctor before participating in the Agency's scuba diving activity. A positive response to a question does not necessarily disqualify you from diving in the activity. A positive response means that there is a preexisting condition that may affect your safety while diving and you must seek the advice of your physician.

Please answer the following questions on your past or present medical history with a **YES** or **NO**. If you are not sure, answer **YES**. If any of these items apply to you, we must request that you consult with a physician prior to participating in scuba diving with the EPA. The diving supervisor will supply you with a Medical Statement and Guidelines for Recreational Scuba Diver's Physical Examination to take to your physician.

_____ Could you be pregnant or are you attempting to become pregnant?

_____ History of diving accidents or decompression sickness?

_____ Do you regularly take prescription or non-prescription medications?
(with the exception of birth control)

_____ History of recurrent back problems?

_____ Are you over 45 years of age *and* have one or more of the following?
* currently smoke a pipe, cigars, or cigarettes
* have a high cholesterol level
* have a family history of heart attacks or strokes

_____ History of back surgery?

_____ History of diabetes?

_____ History of back, arm or leg problems following surgery, injury or fracture?

Have you ever had or do you currently have...

_____ Asthma, or wheezing with breathing, or wheezing with exercise?

_____ Inability to perform moderate exercise (walk one mile within 10 minutes)?

_____ Frequent or severe attacks of hayfever or allergy?

_____ History of high blood pressure or take medicine to control blood pressure?

_____ History of any heart disease?

_____ Frequent colds, sinusitis or bronchitis?

_____ History of heart attacks?

_____ Any form of lung disease?

_____ Angina (heart or blood vessel surgery)?

_____ Pneumothorax (collapsed lung)?

_____ History of ear or sinus surgery?

_____ History of chest surgery?

_____ History of ear disease hearing loss or problems with balance?

_____ Claustrophobia or agoraphobia (fear of closed or open spaces)?

_____ History of problems equalizing (popping) ears with airplane or mountain travel?

_____ Behavioral health problems?

_____ History of bleeding or other blood disorders?

_____ Epilepsy seizures, convulsions or take medications to prevent them?

_____ History of any type of hernia?

_____ Recurring migraine headaches or take medications to prevent them?

_____ History of ulcers or ulcer surgery?

_____ History of blackouts or fainting (full/partial loss of consciousness)?

_____ History of colostomy?

_____ Do you frequently suffer from motion sickness (seasick, carsick, etc.)?

_____ History of drug or alcohol abuse?

The information I have provided about my medical history is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date

Signature of Parents or Guardian where Applicable

Date

DIVER

Please print legibly.

Name _____ Birth Date _____ Age _____
First Initial Last

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Country _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Business Phone (____) _____

Telex _____ FAX (____) _____

Name and address of your family or primary care physician

Physician _____ Clinic/Hospital _____

Address _____ Phone (____) _____

Date of last physical examination _____

Name of examiner _____ Clinic/Hospital _____

Address _____ Phone (____) _____

Were you ever required to have a physical for diving? Yes No If so, when? ____

PHYSICIAN

This person is an applicant for training or is presently certified to engage in scuba (self contained underwater breathing apparatus) diving. Your opinion of the applicant's medical fitness for scuba diving is requested. Please review Guidelines for Recreational Scuba Diver's Physical Examination.

Physician's Impression

- I find no medical conditions that I consider incompatible with diving.
- I am unable to recommend this individual for diving.

Remarks _____

I have reviewed Guidelines for Recreational Scuba Diver's Physical Examination.

_____, M.D. Date _____
Physician's Signature

Physician _____ Clinic/Hospital _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 DIVING SAFETY MANUAL
 (Revision 1.2, September 2010)

GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL SCUBA DIVER'S PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Instructions to the Physician:

Recreational scuba (self contained underwater breathing apparatus) diving has an excellent safety record. To maintain this status it is important to screen divers for physical deficiencies that could place them in peril in the underwater environment.

The Recreational Scuba Diver's Physical Examination contains elements of medical history, review of systems and physical examination. It is designed to detect conditions that put a diver at increased risk for decompression sickness, pulmonary overinflation syndrome with subsequent cerebral gas embolization and loss of consciousness that could lead to drowning. Additionally, the diver must be able to withstand some degree of cold stress, cope with the optical effects of water and have a reserve of physical and mental abilities to deal with possible emergencies.

The history, review of systems and physical examination should include, as a minimum, the points listed below. The list of contraindications, relative and absolute, is not all inclusive. It contains the most commonly encountered medical problems only. The brief introductions should serve to alert the physician to the nature of medical problems that put the diver at risk, and (lead him) to consider the individual patient's state of health.

Diagnostic studies and specialty consultations should be obtained as indicated to satisfy the physician as to the diver's status. A list of references is included to aid in clarifying issues that arise. Physicians at the Divers Alert Network (DAN) are available for consultation by phone (919) 684-2948 during normal business hours. For emergency calls, 24 hours, 7 days a week, call (919) 684-8111.

Some conditions are absolute contraindications to scuba diving. Conditions that are absolute contraindications place the diver at increased risk for injury or death. Others are relative contraindications to scuba that may be resolved with time and proper medical intervention. Ultimately the physician should decide with the individual, based on his knowledge of the patient's medical status, whether the individual is physically qualified to participate in scuba diving.

Remember at all times that scuba is a recreational sport, and it should be fun, not a source of morbidity or mortality.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEMS

Relative Contraindications: The diagnoses listed below potentially render the diver unable to meet the exertions] performance requirements likely to be encountered in recreational diving. The diagnoses listed may lead the diver to experience cardiac ischemia and its consequences. Formalized stress testing is encouraged if there is any doubt regarding physical performance capability. The suggested minimum criteria for stress testing in such cases is 13 METS. Failure to meet the exercise criteria is disqualifying. Conditioning and retesting may make later qualification possible.

- * **History of CABG or PCTA for CAD**
- * **History of myocardial infarction**
- * **Hypertension**
- * **History of dysrhythmias requiring medication for suppression**
- * **Valvular regurgitation**
- * **Asymptomatic mitral valve prolapse**
- * **Pacemakers** - The pathologic process that necessitated pacing should be addressed regarding the fitness to dive. Finally in those instances where the problem necessitating pacing does not preclude diving, will the diver be able to meet the performance criteria?
Note: Pacemakers must be certified by the manufacturer as able to withstand the pressure changes involved in recreational diving (to depths of 130 feet of sea water).

Absolute Contraindications: Venous gas emboli produced during decompression may cross **Intracardiac shunts** and enter the cerebral circulation with potentially catastrophic results. **Asymmetric septal hypertrophy** and **valvular stenosis** may lead to the sudden onset of unconsciousness during exercise.

- * **Congestive heart failure**

PULMONARY

Any process or lesion that impedes air flow from the lung places the diver at risk for pulmonary overinflation with alveolar rupture and the possibility of cerebral air embolization. Asthma (reactive airway disease), COPD cystic or cavitating lung diseases all may lead to air trapping. Spirometry, provocative tests such as methacholine challenge and other studies to detect air trapping should be carried out to establish to the examining physician's satisfaction that the diver is not at risk. A **pneumothorax** that occurs or recurs while diving is catastrophic. As the diver ascends, air trapped in the cavity expands rapidly producing a **tension pneumothorax**.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **History of prior asthma or reactive airway disease (RAD)***
- * **History of exercise/cold induced bronchospasm (EIB)***
- * **History of solid, cystic or cavitating lesion***
- * **Pneumothorax secondary to:** thoracic surgery,* trauma or pleural penetration,* previous overinflation injury*
- * **Restrictive Disease****
(*Air Trapping must be excluded) (**Exercise Testing necessary)

Absolute Contraindications:

- * **Active RAD (asthma), EIB, COPD or history of the same with abnormal PFT's or positive challenge**
- * **Restrictive diseases with exercise impairment**
- * **History of spontaneous pneumothorax**

NEUROLOGICAL

Neurologic abnormalities that affect a divers ability to perform exercise should be assessed individually based on the degree of compromise involved.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **Migraine headaches** whose symptoms or severity impair motor or cognitive function
- * **History of head injury with sequelae other than seizure**
- * **Herniated nucleus pulposus**
- * **Peripheral neuropathy**
- * **Trigeminal neuralgia**
- * **History of spinal cord or brain injury without residual neurologic deficit**
- * **History of cerebral gas embolism without residual pulmonary air trapping has been excluded**
- * **Cerebral palsy in the absence of seizure activity**

Absolute Contraindications: Abnormalities where the level of consciousness is subject to impairment put the diver at increased risk of drowning. Divers with spinal cord or brain abnormalities where perfusion is impaired are at increased risk of spinal cord or cerebral decompression sickness.

- * **History of seizures other than childhood febrile seizures**
- * **Intracranial tumor or aneurysm**
- * **History of TIA or CVA**
- * **History of spinal cord injury, disease or surgery with residual sequelae**
- * **History of Type II (serious and/or central nervous system) decompression sickness with permanent neurologic deficits**

OTO LARYNGOLOGICAL

Equalization of pressure must take place during ascent and descent between ambient water pressure and the external auditory canal, middle ear and paranasal sinuses. Failure of this to occur results at least in pain and in the worst case rupture of the occluded space with disabling and possible lethal consequences.

The inner ear is fluid filled and therefore noncompressible. The flexible interfaces between the middle and inner ear, the round and oval windows, are however subject to pressure changes. Previously ruptured but healed round or oval window membranes are at increased risk of rupture due to failure to equalize pressure or due to marked over-pressurization during vigorous or explosive Valsalva maneuvers.

The larynx and pharynx must be free of an obstruction to airflow. The laryngeal and epiglottic structure must function normally to prevent aspiration.

Mandibular and maxillary function must be capable of allowing the patient to hold a scuba mouth piece. Individuals who have had mid-face fractures may be prone to barotrauma and rupture of the air filled cavities involved.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **Recurrent otitis externa**
- * **Significant obstruction of external auditory canal**
- * **History of significant cold injury to pinna**
- * **Eustachian tube dysfunction**
- * **Recurrent otitis media or sinusitis**
- * **History of TM perforation**
- * **History of tympanoplasty**
- * **History of mastoidectomy**
- * **Significant conductive or sensorineural hearing impairment**
- * **Facial nerve paralysis not associated with barotrauma**
- * **Full prosthodontic devices**
- * **History of mid-face fracture**
- * **Unhealed oral surgery sites**
- * **History of head and/or neck therapeutic radiation**
- * **History of temporomandibular joint dysfunction**

Absolute Contraindications:

- * **Monomeric TM**
- * **Open TM perforation**
- * **tube myringotomy**
- * **History of stapedectomy**
- * **History of ossicular chain surgery**
- * **History of inner ear surgery**
- * **History of round window rupture**
- * **Facial nerve paralysis secondary to barotrauma**
- * **Inner ear disease other than presbycusis**

- * **Uncorrected upper airway obstruction**
- * **Laryngectomy or status post partial laryngectomy**
- * **Trachostomy**
- * **Uncorrected laryngocele**
- * **History of vestibular decompression sickness**

GASTROINTESTINAL

Relative Contraindications. As with other organ systems and disease states, a process that debilitates the diver chronically may impair exercise performance. Additionally diving activity may take place in areas remote from medical care. The possibility of acute recurrences of disability or lethal symptoms must be considered.

- * **Peptic ulcer disease**
- * **Inflammatory bowel disease**
- * **Malabsorption states**
- * **Functional bowel disorders**
- * **Post gastrectomy dumping syndrome**
- * **Paraesophageal or hiatal hernia**

Absolute Contraindications: Altered anatomical relationships secondary to surgery or malformations that lead to gas trapping may cause serious problems. Gas trapped in a hollow viscous expands as the diver surfaces and can lead to rupture or in the case of the upper GI tract, emesis. Emesis underwater may lead to drowning.

- * **High grade gastric outlet obstruction**
- * **Chronic or recurrent small bowel obstruction**
- * **Entero-cutaneous fistulae that do not drain freely**
- * **Esophageal diverticula**
- * **Severe gastroesophageal reflux**
- * **Achalasia**
- * **Unrepaired hernias of the abdominal wall potentially containing bowel**

METABOLIC AND ENDOCRINOLOGICAL

Relative Contraindications: With the exception of diabetes mellitus, states of altered hormonal or metabolic function should be assessed according to their impact on the individual's ability to tolerate the moderate exercise requirement and environmental stress of sport diving. Generally divers with altered hormonal status should be in as near an optimal physiologic state as is possible. It should be noted that obesity predisposes the individual to decompression sickness and is an indicator of poor overall physical fitness.

- * **Hormonal excess or deficiency**
- * **Obesity**
- * **Renal Insufficiency**

Absolute Contraindications: The potentially rapid change in level of consciousness associated with hypoglycemia in diabetics on Insulin therapy or oral anti-hypoglycemia medications can result in drowning. Diving is therefore contraindicated.

PREGNANCY

Venous gas emboli formed during decompression may result in fetal malformations. **Diving is absolutely contraindicated during any stage of pregnancy.**

HEMATOLOGICAL

Abnormalities resulting in altered rheological properties may increase the risk of decompression sickness.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **Sickle cell trait**
- * **Acute anemia**

Absolute Contraindications:

- * **Sickle cell disease**
- * **Polycythemia**
- * **Leukemia**

ORTHOPEDIC

Relative impairment of mobility particularly in the small boat environment or ashore with equipment weighing up to 40 pounds must be assessed. The impact of exercise ability is also an important consideration.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **Chronic back pain**
- * **Amputation**
- * **Scoliosis - must also assess impact on pulmonary function**
- * **Aseptic necrosis - possible risk of progression related to adequacy of decompression**

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Behavioral: The diver's mental capacity and emotional makeup are important to safe diving. The student diver must have sufficient learning abilities to grasp information presented to him by his instructors, be able to safety plan and execute his own dives and react to changes about him in the underwater environment. The student's motivation to learn scuba and his ability to deal with potentially dangerous situations is also crucial to safe diving.

Relative Contraindications:

- * **Developmental delay**
- * **History of drug or alcohol abuse**
- * **History of previous psychotic episodes**

Absolute Contraindications:

- * **Inappropriate motivation to dive - solely to please spouse or partner, to prove oneself in the face of personal fears**
- * **Claustrophobia and agoraphobia**
- * **Active psychosis or while receiving psychotropic medications**
- * **History of panic disorder**
- * **Drug or alcohol abuse**

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ENDORSERS

Paul A. Thombs, M.D.
Medical Director
Hyperbaric Medical Center
St. Luke's Hospital, Denver, CO

Richard E. Moon, M.D., F.A.C.P, P.C.C.P
Departments of Anesthesiology and Pulmonary Medicine
Duke University Medical Center
Durham, NC

Keith Van Meter, M.D., F.A.C.E.P.
Assistant Clinical Professor of Surgery
Tulane University School of Medicine

Paul G. Linaweaver, M.D., F.A.C.P
Santa Barbara Medical Clinic
Undersea Medical Specialist

Peter Bennett, Ph.D., D.Sc.
Duke University Medical Center
Durham, NC

Roy A. Myers, M.D.
MIEMS
Baltimore, MD

Robert W. Goldmann, M.D.
St. Luke's Hospital
Milwaukee, WI

James Vorosmarti, M.D.

APPENDIX E

"Dive Safe" Ship Operations and Checklist

(Incorporated by Reference: National Maritime Safety Program,
EPA Vessel Safety Manual)

APPENDIX F

Letters of Certification (Examples)

EXAMPLE – LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORY 1 SABINE ISLAND DRIVE GULF BREEZE, FLORIDA 32561-5299

SAMPLE

LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

JOHN Q. DIVER, III

Is Hereby Certified to Dive at the Level of:

DIVER TRAINEE

AUTHORIZATION: You are authorized to use open-circuit, self-contained underwater breathing apparatus incident to the performance of your official duties, and subject to the prescribed EPA policy and regulations governing the use of such equipment, as provided in the EPA *Diving Safety Manual*.

RESTRICTIONS: When diving in unfamiliar conditions, you must be under the supervision of a diver trained and experienced in those conditions.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS: This diver has successfully completed Diving Accident Management.

REMARKS: This diver has completed all requisite classroom work; however, due to a temporary change in physical status, this candidate did not participate in the required field exercises, as a Scientific Diver, the candidate must demonstrate competence in these field exercises at the EPA Diver Training Facility in Gulf Breeze, Florida.

May 1981

James M. Patrick
Training Director EPA
Diving Safety Board

Don Lawhorn
Chairman EPA
Diving Safety Board

EXAMPLE – LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORY 1 SABINE ISLAND DRIVE GULF BREEZE, FLORIDA 32561-5299

SAMPLE

LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

JOHN Q. DIVER, III

Is Hereby Certified to Dive at the Level of:

SCIENTIFIC DIVER

AUTHORIZATION: You are authorized to use open-circuit, self-contained underwater breathing apparatus incident to the performance of your official duties, and subject to the prescribed EPA policy and regulations governing the use of such equipment, as provided in the EPA *Diving Safety Manual*.

RESTRICTIONS: When diving in unfamiliar conditions, you must be under the supervision of a diver trained and experienced in those conditions.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS: This diver has successfully completed diving Accident Management and Dry-suit Training.

REMARKS: The above individual was examined and found technically qualified and psychologically adapted for diving.

October 16, 1996

James M. Patrick
Training Director EPA
Diving Safety Board

Bruce Reynolds
Chairman
Diving Safety Board

EXAMPLE – LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORY 1 SABINE ISLAND DRIVE GULF BREEZE, FLORIDA 32561-5299

SAMPLE

LETTER OF CERTIFICATION TO DIVE

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

JOHN Q. DIVER, III

Is Hereby Certified to Dive at the Level of:

DIVE MASTER

AUTHORIZATION: You are authorized to use open-circuit, self-contained underwater breathing apparatus incident to the performance of your official duties, and subject to the prescribed EPA policy and regulations governing the use of such equipment, as provided in the EPA *Diving Safety Manual*.

RESTRICTIONS: When diving in unfamiliar conditions, you must be under the supervision of a diver trained and experienced in those conditions.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS: This diver has successfully completed Diving Accident Management, Scientific Diver, Dry-Suit and Dive Master Training. He is certified to use a Dry-Suit in operational diving and supervise EPA divers.

REMARKS: The above individual was examined and found technically qualified and psychologically adapted for diving.

October 16, 1996

James M. Patrick
Training Director EPA
Diving Safety Board

Bruce Reynolds
Chairman
Diving Safety Board

APPENDIX G

Letter of Reciprocity (Example)

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORY
27 TARZWELL DRIVE
NARRAGANSETT, RHODE ISLAND 02882**

Diver Authorization Reciprocity Agreement

Between

**The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Diving Safety Board (DSB)**

and

**The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FLDEP)
Florida Marine Research Institute (FMRI)**

Unit Diving Officer: Walter C. Jaap

Period of Agreement: November 1, 1994 – October 31, 1995

The EPA Diving Program recognizes the FLDEP FMRI authorization to dive as equivalent to EPA authorization. Under this agreement, FLDEP divers who meet FMRI Standards for Scientific Diving (November 15, 1991) Section 4.33 are allowed to participate in EPA-sponsored diving projects and operations. Each diver will be required to present a current letter of authorization, signed by the FMRI Diving Officer. This agreement can only be applied to personnel directly employed by or working under the control of the State of Florida unless agreed upon by both diving programs.

Maintenance of this agreement is contingent upon strict compliance with all EPA diving regulations and standards, when diving on EPA projects, as set forth in the EPA Diving Safety Policy. This policy specifically includes the following: diver certification, annual medical examinations of the divers using the Standard Forms SF-88 and SF-93 and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) medical criteria, annual cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and first aid certification for divers, periodic inspection and testing of certain pieces of diving equipment, the preparation and approval of a dive plan before each dive, the logging of the details of each dive, the maintenance of diver proficiency, and the provision for diver requalification should proficiency lapse, the presence of a qualified Divemaster at each dive site. The only exception to standard EPA procedures will be that all certification and medical information will be retained by FMRI.

The EPA Unit Diving Officer for (Athens, Georgia), Donald Lawhorn, will be the point of contact. Please contact him at (706) 555-5555 if there are any questions regarding diver certification, physicals, operational protocols, or technical procedures. Compliance with the terms of this agreement and actual diving activities are subject to on-site action by the EPA DSB. This agreement may be terminated or modified by the DSB at any time. This agreement may be renewed annually by mutual consent of both diving programs.

Don Lawhorn, October 16, 1994, Chairman, EPA Diving Safety Board

Attachments: EPA Diving Safety Policy
EPA Diving Medical Examination Forms (or Standard Forms SF-88 and SF-93 with NOAA
Medical Criteria)

APPENDIX H

EPA Diving Forms

EPA DIVING SAFETY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This plan establishes general guidelines and procedures for safe and efficient scuba diving. The intent is to provide written guidance for quick reference in the field by the Divemaster and the dive team. This plan also provides some guidance beyond that found in EPA's Diving Safety Policy (DSP), which is also required to accompany all diving operations.

Additional precautions and procedures required for surface-supplied diving will be addressed in the Dive Plans for those operations.

DIVE OPERATIONS

1. A Dive Plan for the proposed diving operation containing all of the elements in EPA's "Generic List for Dive Plans and Reports" shall be approved by the Unit Diving Officer (UDO). Associated field plans will be approved in accordance with the UDO's management system.
2. Diving with air will be conducted in accordance with the U.S. Navy No-Decompression Limits and Repetitive Group Designation Table for No-Decompression Air Dives. Diving with Nitrox will be conducted in accordance with the NOAA Nitrox Tables for No-Decompression Limits and the Repetitive Group Designation Table for No-Decompression Dives.
3. During "live-boat" diving, the Tender or Divemaster will maintain continuous visual contact with the divers, or their bubbles after they descend, and keep the boat operator informed of their position. The boat should always be positioned to render immediate assistance to the divers.
4. The Dive Plan should require that the deepest dive be scheduled first and be followed by shallower dives. If this is not possible, the divers must comply with Nos. 5 and 6, below.
5. As a general rule, all dives should terminate at least 5 minutes before the no-decompression limit.
6. During repetitive diving at water depths greater than 50 ft, on ascent the diver should stop at approximately 15 ft for 2-3 minutes for a safety decompression stop on the second and succeeding dives. If a safety decompression stop is taken, the time spent at the stop has to be added to the bottom time for that dive.
7. While diving, divers will remain in contact (i.e., either visual, auditory, tactile, or through communications from the Tender) with at least one other diver. All divers must surface if contact or communication is lost. No one may dive unattended.
8. A diver should start their ascent from the bottom when their tank pressure decreases to 500 psi. A diver must begin an ascent with at least 500 psi in his/her cylinder if they have to make a safety stop at 15 ft or if required by environmental conditions.

9. When diving in extremely limited visibility and overhead environments, such as piers or other situations presenting entrapment or entanglement hazards, the rule of thirds should be followed: one third of the tank pressure may be used to get to the dive objective, the second third may be used to complete the work assignment and return to the surface, and the final third of the tank pressure is for a safety reserve. This rule does not supersede the 500 psi rule (No. 8).
10. When diving in areas with possibilities of entrapment or entanglement, such as described above in Rule No. 9, an extra open-circuit scuba regulator will be at the dive site and attached to a standby full scuba cylinder complete with backpack.
11. During air dives always ascend at a rate of 30 fpm (minor variations in ascent rate between 20 and 40 fpm are acceptable).
12. No dive shall exceed 130 ft of depth without a working recompression chamber attended by trained personnel at the dive site.
13. Diving operations must be conducted in accordance with all appropriate EPA policies and standards (e.g., for Nitrox diving or flying after diving).
14. In an emergency, the divemaster in charge of the diving operation may have to make field decisions that deviate from the requirements of this safety plan or EPA's DSP to prevent or minimize a situation that could likely cause death or serious physical harm. If this occurs, the Divemaster shall provide the Regional Diving Officer with written explanation and description of the incident within two working days of its occurrence. If there is no serious injury, this report may be included in the Dive Report for the diving operation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIVE PERSONNEL

Divemasters shall: (1) be responsible for preparing for the diving operation, including checking non-personal equipment such as the pressure in the oxygen cylinders, (2) ensure that all divers are physically fit to dive, (3) assist the Tender and be in complete charge of the diving operation, (4) ensure that all diving operations are conducted safely in accordance with EPA's DSP and standards, (5) promptly prepares a Dive Report upon completion of the diving activities, and (6) gives the "Pre-Dive Briefing" to include:

1. Designating dive team members including the Alternate Divemaster
2. Providing a brief description of the dive site
3. Discussing the objectives of the diving operation
4. Reviewing the operation of equipment to be used
5. Identifying any potential pollution sources
6. Discussing environmental and any hazardous conditions
7. Monitor divers for signs/symptoms of "bubble trouble"
8. Reviewing emergency and evacuation procedures

For the emergency and evacuation procedures, the following will be identified and discussed in as much detail as is appropriate for conditions at the dive site:

1. Establish evacuation routes and means of transportation.
2. Review methods of communication.
3. Review cardio-pulmonary resuscitation procedures and the use of medical oxygen, if necessary.

IN THE EVENT OF A DIVING ACCIDENT

1. Maintain heart and breathing functions.
2. Do *not* remove oxygen from patient unless necessary.
3. Reconstruct dive profiles while in route to the chamber.
4. Dive partner should accompany victim, or go to chamber ASAP.
5. Retain all dive gear for examination.

All Divers shall: (1) dive only if they are physically and mentally fit and properly trained for the task to be performed, (2) keep their diving equipment in safe operating condition, (3) wear a compass and depth and tank pressure gauges and, when necessary, a dive watch or bottom timing device, and (4) refuse to dive if diving conditions are unsafe or unfavorable, or if the diving operation violates the dictates of EPA’s safety policies or standards.

Standby Divers shall: (1) be fully equipped and ready to give immediate assistance at the dive site, (2) receive the same briefing and instructions as the working divers, and (3) monitor the progress of the diving operations.

Tenders shall: (1) assist divers and track their location in the water; (2) record each diver’s bottom time, tank pressures, and maximum depth; (3) alert the divers, when necessary, on the status of their bottom time via the Diver Recall Unit; (4) advise other vessels of diving operations and warn off boat traffic that could pose a hazard to the divers; and (5) perform no other concurrent function which interferes with these duties.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL PER DIVE TEAM

Except under emergency conditions, the minimum number of personnel required per dive team shall be as follows:

Water Depth/Situation	No. of Divers	Standby Diver	Tender	Total
Under 15 ft/diver visible at all times	1	1 ^(1/)	1	3
Over 15 ft and less than 60 ft/ without unusual conditions ^(3/)	2	-	1 ^(2/)	3
Under 60 ft/with unusual conditions	2	1 ^(1/)	1	4
Over 60 ft and less than 130 ft/ all conditions	2	1 ^(1/)	1	4

Notes:

1. The Standby Diver will be the Divemaster or Alternate Divemaster, if the Divemaster is diving.
2. The Tender will also be the Divemaster or Alternate Divemaster, if the Divemaster is diving.
3. Unusual conditions as determined by the Divemaster considering weather, water currents, visibility in the water, potential entanglements, or any other factor that may compromise the safety of diving operations.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The following telephone numbers are appropriate for diving operations in the Puget Sound area. Emergency telephone numbers for diving operations in other areas will be listed on the Dive Plan prepared for that specific operation.

Virginia Mason Hospital

Emergency Room 583-6433

Recompression Chamber583-6543

U.S. Naval Torpedo Station, Keyport, Washington

Recompression Chamber . 396-2522 or 396-2563

After hours 396-2551

(ask for the Duty Desk Officer)

U.S. Coast Guard, Seattle, Washington VHF Ch 16

Search and Rescue 220-7001

Divers Alert Network

Emergencies Only 1-919-684-9111

Other Business 1-919-684-2948

U.S. EPA DIVE PLAN

DATE OF REQUEST: _____ APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

DIVE DATES: _____ LOCATION: _____

SURVEY OBJECTIVES: _____

DIVEMASTER: _____ TENDER(s): _____

DIVERS: _____

LAUNCH SITE/PLATFORM: _____

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: 911, COAST GUARD CH-16, DAN (919) 684-9111

HOSPITAL: NON-EMERGENCY

CHAMBER LOCATION: _____

***** OXYGEN WILL BE ON-SITE *****

ANTICIPATED CONDITIONS: MAX DEPTH: _____ AIR/WATER TEMP: _____/_____ MAX CURRENT: _____

TIDAL INFLUENCES: _____ VESSEL TRAFFIC: _____

POLLUTION SOURCES: _____

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS: _____

VISIBILITY: _____ OTHER: _____

EQUIPMENT: VIKING DRY SUIT _____ AGA _____ SURFACE SUPPLY _____

STANDARD SCUBA _____ OTHER _____ SUPERLIGHT 27 _____

SPECIAL INFORMATION:

POST-DIVE REPORT

WATER TEMP:

AIR TEMP/WEATHER:

CURRENTS: None

VISIBILITY:

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS: N/A

OTHER (TIDES, POLLUTION, VESSEL TRAFFIC, ETC.):

PROCEDURAL NOTES

EQUIPMENT NOTES (REPAIRS, ETC.):

DIVEMASTER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____

EPA DIVE LOG

The designated project Divemaster is responsible for completing a log, which includes the following:

1. Dive location
2. Dive platform/staging area designation (e.g., boat or dock)
3. Conditions (sea state, air and water temperatures, current and visibility)
4. Diver roster and individual responsibility during the diving activity
5. Dive in-water entry and exit times
6. Bottom times
7. Maximum depths

Personal logging of dive entries currently takes the form of spreadsheets such as Excel[®] and Lotus 1-2-3[®], EPA-provided waterproof logbooks and a logging program.

DIVE TENDER'S FIELD LOG

Date: _____ Location: _____

Divemaster: _____ Diving Platform: _____

Site Description: _____

Dive Objective: (e.g., Plan Reference) _____

DIVER	TENDER	TANK PRESSURE		TIME		TOTAL BOTTOM TIME	MAX DEPTH FEET
		IN	OUT	IN	OUT		

Dive Notes (*jobs completed, problems encountered, etc.*): _____

Emergency Information

1. Call laboratory on radio
2. Give receptionist exact location and details of emergency
3. Tell him/her to **DIAL 911** respond to dive platform location

US Coast Guard: VHF Channel 16
 Diver Alert Network: 919-684-8111
 Narragansett Rescue: 789-1011
 South County Hospital Emergency Room: 782-8010

Recompression Chambers

U.S. Navy Sub Base Groton: 203-449-3676
 City Island, New York: 718-720-4994
 Norwalk Hospital: 203-852-2484
 MGH, Boston: 617-573-4411

PRE-DIVE CHECKLIST – SEE OTHER SIDE

DIVEMASTER PRE-DIVE BRIEFING

(The Divemaster may elect to use the Safety Audit Checklist for a more thorough briefing.)

1. Review emergency evacuation procedures.
2. Review emergency equipment (e.g., first aid, oxygen kits, radio check with lab).
3. Review dive profile (e.g., times, depths, repetitive calculations).
4. Review communications (e.g., hand signals, diver recall).
5. Review project objective(s).
6. Review potential hazards (physical and pollutant).
7. Review decontamination procedures for contaminated water diving.
8. Review specialized equipment to be used.
9. Review duties of dive team personnel (e.g., identify Divemaster, Tender, etc.).
10. All divers check personal dive equipment.
11. Record tank pressures.
12. Have medical emergency forms on-site.
13. Notify vessel traffic/Coast Guard if necessary.

POST-DIVE PROCEDURES

1. Monitor divers for symptoms of "bubble trouble."
2. Protect divers from hypothermia or hyperthermia.
3. Have diver's drinking water available.
4. Record bottom times, tank pressures, and water depths on Tender's Log.
5. Record problems, malfunctions, and hazards encountered on Tender's Log.
6. Follow appropriate decontamination procedures, as appropriate.
7. Clean up and stow all equipment; wash AGA masks with soap and warm water.

Table 1: "No Decompression" Limits and Repetitive Group Designation Table for "No Decompression" Dives

Depth	No Decompression Limits	Repetitive Groups															
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	Z
10	-	57	101	158	245	426											
15	-	36	60	88	121	163	217	297	449								
20	-	26	43	61	82	106	133	165	205	256	330	461					
25	-	20	33	47	62	78	97	117	140	166	198	236	285	354	469	595	
30	371	17	27	38	50	62	76	91	107	125	145	167	193	223	260	307	371
35	232	14	23	32	42	52	63	74	87	100	115	131	148	168	190	215	232
40	163	12	20	27	36	44	53	63	73	84	95	108	121	135	151	163	
45	125	11	17	24	31	39	46	55	63	72	82	92	102	114	125		
50	92	9	15	21	28	34	41	48	56	63	71	80	89	92			
55	74	8	14	19	25	31	37	43	50	56	63	71	74				
60	60	7	12	17	22	28	33	39	45	51	57	60					
70	48	6	10	14	19	23	28	32	37	42	47	48					
80	39	5	9	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	39						
90	30	4	7	11	14	17	21	24	28	30							
100	25	4	6	9	12	15	18	21	25								
110	20	3	6	8	11	14	16	19	20								
120	15	3	5	7	10	12	15										
130	10	2	4	6	9	10											
140	10	2	4	6	8	10											

Instructions

1. Enter Table 1 on the exact or next greater depth than that to which exposed, and select the exact or next greater exposure time than the actual exposure time. The repetitive group designation is indicated by the letter at the head of the vertical column above the selected exposure time.
2. Enter Table 2 along the diagonal line designating the diver's repetitive group obtained from Table 1. Read horizontally until the surface interval time is found between the two times listed. The new repetitive group designation is found by going vertically down the column.
3. Continue down to enter Table 3. Using the new repetitive pressure group found after the surface interval and the planned depth of the dive, determine the Residual Nitrogen Time (RNT) from Table 3. Determine the Adjusted No Decompression Limit (ANDL) for the repetitive dive by subtracting RNT from the No Decompression Limit (NDL) for the planned dive depth, i.e., ANDL= NDL - RNT at planned repetitive dive depth.

Table 2: Surface Interval Table

Repetitive Dive Depth	Repetitive Group at the Beginning of the Surface Interval															
	Z	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A
10											427	246	159	101	58	
15								450	298	218	164	122	89	61	37	
20						462	331	257	206	166	134	106	83	62	44	27
25			470	354	286	237	198	167	141	118	98	79	63	48	34	21
30	372	308	261	224	194	168	146	126	108	92	77	63	51	39	28	18
35	245	216	191	169	149	132	116	101	88	75	64	53	43	33	24	15
40	188	169	152	136	122	109	97	85	74	64	55	45	37	29	21	13
45	154	140	127	115	104	93	83	73	64	56	48	40	32	25	18	12
50	131	120	109	99	90	81	73	65	57	49	42	35	29	23	17	11
55	114	105	96	88	80	72	65	58	51	44	38	32	26	20	15	10
60	101	93	86	79	72	65	58	52	46	40	35	29	24	18	14	9
70	83	77	71	65	59	54	49	44	39	34	29	25	20	16	12	8
80	70	65	60	55	51	46	42	38	33	29	25	22	18	14	10	7
90	61	57	52	48	44	41	37	33	29	26	22	19	16	12	9	6
100	54	50	47	43	40	36	33	30	26	23	20	17	14	11	8	5
110	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	16	13	10	8	5
120	44	41	38	35	32	30	27	24	22	19	17	14	12	9	7	5
130	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	18	15	13	11	9	6	4
140	37	34	32	30	27	25	23	21	19	16	14	12	10	8	6	4

Table 3: Repetitive Dive Table (Residual Nitrogen Times). * Dives following surface intervals of more than 12 hours are not repetitive dives. Use actual bottom times in the Standard Air Decompression Tables to compute decompression for such dives.

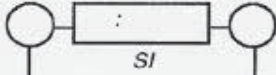
*If no Residual Nitrogen Time is given, then the repetitive group does not change.

Project: _____  **EPA Repetitive Dive Worksheet**  Date: _____

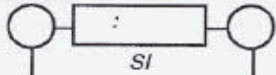
TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi

T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____

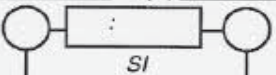
Diver: _____




Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL	ABT



Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT



Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT



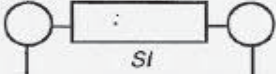
Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT

Regulator No. _____
 Locations: _____
 Comments: _____

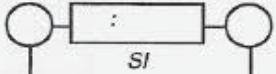
TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi TP(in): _____ psi TP(out): _____ psi

T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____ T(in): _____ T(out): _____

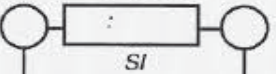
Diver: _____




Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL	ABT



Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT



Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT



Planned	Actual
Depth: _____ ft.	Depth: _____ ft.
NDL -RNT _____ ANDL	RNT +ABT _____ TBT

Regulator No. _____
 Locations: _____
 Comments: _____

Notes: TP=Tank Pressure, T=Clock Time, SI=Surface Interval, NDL=No Decompression Limit, RNT=Residual Nitrogen Time, ANDL=Adjusted No Decompression Limit, ABT = Actual Bottom Time, TBT=Total Bottom Time

Divesheet: Revised 8/03



EPA Field Emergency Form



Name		Date
Date of Birth	Social Security Number N/A	
Office Address	Office Phone	Home Phone
Immediate Supervisor	Supervisor's Phone	
Your Blood Type	Medic Alert Tag <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Typical Blood Pressure	Wear Contact Lenses? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Date of Last Tetanus Shot	Allergic to Antibiotics/Anesthesia	Anaphylactic Reactions to Toxins
Current Medications	Other Medical Considerations	
Personal Medical Coverage Plan	Personal Physician	Physician's Phone
In Emergency Notify	Relationship	
Address/Phone		

See Back Side for More Information

Dive Profile

TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____	TP: _____
T: _____	T: _____	T: _____	T: _____	T: _____	T: _____	T: _____	T: _____
Diver:							
	BT: _____	BT: _____	BT: _____	BT: _____			
	D: _____	D: _____	D: _____	D: _____			
Locations:	_____	_____	_____	_____			
Comments:	_____						

Notes: TP = Tank Pressure, T = Clock Time, BT = Bottom Time, D = Maximum Depth, and SI = Surface Interval

Time Oxygen Administration Started	Ended
Further Description of the Accident	

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

APPENDIX I

EPA Dive Program Report

ANNUAL REPORT OF DIVE TRAINING AND OPERATIONS

Diving Unit:	[Input Unit; e.g., Region or Laboratory]	Time Period:	[Input Start Date]
	[Input UDO Name]		[Input End Date]
	[List Alternate UDO Names]		

A. DIVING ACTIVITIES

1. Describe each type of diving operation; include pollutant exposure (use separate sheet, if necessary).
2. Locations of diving operations (list each state and type of water body).
3. Dive Statistics:

<u>Number of Dives</u>	<u>Number of Exposure Days*</u>
Work: [Input Number]	Work: [Input Number]
Training: [Input Number]	Training: [Input Number]
Proficiency: [Input Number]	Proficiency: [Input Number]

B. DIVING ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, OR INCIDENTS

Describe all accidents, injuries, and incidents.
 (Use a separate sheet if necessary, and include copies of all applicable forms, e.g., EPA Form 1440-9, CA-1 or CA-2.)

C. DIVE TRAINING

1. Describe the type of training conducted/received, and list the name, office, and level of certification for each trainee. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)
2. List any training needed.

D. DIVE EQUIPMENT

1. Same as last year? Yes _____ No _____
2. If no, list and note the equipment that is new or removed from service. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)
3. Describe any important equipment problems.

4. Equipment needed.

E. REVIEW OF UNIT DIVING PERSONNEL

(List diving personnel names, current ages, gender, and certification levels.)

F. TIME SPENT ON THE NATIONAL DIVE PROGRAM

1. Time expenditures:

ACTIVITY (Describe)	TIME
---------------------	------

Assistance with Diver Training Course

Review of Documents
(Identify, e.g., dive plans)

Performing Action Items
(Identify, e.g. Prep for and Audit of Dive ops)

Preparation for and Attendance at Meetings
(Identify)

Technical Assistance to Other Units

Other

2. Fiscal (monetary) expenditures:

COST OF TRAVEL SPENT ON NATIONAL PROGRAM (list by trip)

* Each day of diving is an exposure day per diver (e.g., three divers diving on a given day would equal three exposure days).

APPENDIX J

Safety Audit Checklist

NOTES:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

I. DIVING SAFETY PLAN AND DIVE PLAN

The Diving Safety Plan and Dive Plan can be two separate documents or they may be combined. The Dive Plan is specific to the proposed dive operation, and the Safety Plan can be either a generic plan developed by the dive unit or simply a copy of the Diving Safety Policy, the U.S. Navy Decompression Tables, and area-specific emergency information. The elements of each plan are combined in the following checklist:

A. EMERGENCY INFORMATION

1. Was the nearest medical facility (i.e., hospital or clinic) identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Was a method of communication with the nearest medical facility established?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Was the nearest operational recompression chamber identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Was a method of communication with the recompression chamber established?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Was a method of emergency evacuation identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Was a method of communication with the means of emergency transportation established?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Are the Divers Alert Network (DAN) telephone numbers (919-684-2948 or 919-684-9111) for medical advice and locations of recompression chambers listed?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
8. Is a copy of the EPA's Diving Safety Policy readily available at the dive site to address unanticipated events or procedural issues?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

B. PROJECT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Did the Dive Plan describe the proposed dive project?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Were the objectives of the proposed dive project clearly identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Were the potential hazards identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Were the potential sources of pollution identified?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Were other environmental conditions identified and discussed in the Dive Plan?
 - a. tidal heights YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - b. water currents YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - c. max. dive depth YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - d. in-water visibility YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - e. weather YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - f. boat/vessel traffic YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Were the divers, boat operators, and support personnel identified in the plan?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Has the dive plan been approved by the Unit Diving Officer?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

II. PRE-DIVE BRIEFING AND ACTIVITIES

The Project Leader and Divemaster for the dive should gather all project personnel together just before diving operations are to start and review the following topics:

1. Was there a review of emergency evacuation procedures?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Was there a review of diving accident management and emergency equipment (e.g., first aid and oxygen kits)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Were any safety protocols for the dive reviewed (e.g., a safety stop at 15 ft for dives deeper than 60 ft, buoy line descent/ascent, low air supply procedures/alternate air source use)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Were the diver-to-diver and tender-to-diver communication procedures reviewed?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Was there a review of the project description and objectives?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Was there a review of the potential hazards:
 - a. Pollution sources?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - b. Environmental conditions: waves/strong currents/visibility?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Were decontamination materials available and decontamination procedures reviewed for polluted water diving operations?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
8. Was there a review of any specialized equipment for the dive (e.g., pinger, pinger locator, current meters, remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs), dive sleds, oxygen meters for Nitrox)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
9. Were the dive team roles identified (i.e., Divemaster, Alternate Divemaster, Tender, and if needed, Standby Diver)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
10. Did the divers check all of their dive equipment prior to each dive?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

11. Were the tank pressures checked and recorded before each diver entered the water and subsequent dive start times by the Divemaster or Tender?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

12. Was the personal emergency information available for each diver (e.g., medical history, family notification) and stored in a manner to ensure the privacy of the information?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

13. Was vessel traffic control notified, if necessary?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

III. OPERATIONS DURING THE DIVE

During the dive, it is important to observe the position of the support vessel(s), operation of the equipment, and the topside diving personnel.

1. Was the Tender monitoring the divers and not performing another function that could interfere with tending responsibilities?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Was the support vessel clear of the diving area?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Were the appropriate dive flags displayed on the vessel tending the divers?
 - a. Red/white "diver down" flag on inland/coastal waters?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
 - b. Red/white flag and blue/white code alpha flag in waters with international vessel traffic?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Were the size of the dive flags appropriate for the diving operation?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Was a Standby Diver equipped and ready to provide immediate assistance?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Was a tender-to-diver communication system deployed (i.e., diver recall unit)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Were the emergency first aid and oxygen kits on the dive platform?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

IV. POST-DIVE PROCEDURES

Monitoring post-dive diving operations is important to ensure that divers are taking the necessary precautions to avoid injury, protect themselves from environmental conditions, and maintain their equipment.

1. Did the Divemaster and/or Tender monitor each diver exiting the water for signs and symptoms of "bubble trouble?"
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Were the divers protecting themselves from hypothermia or hyperthermia?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Was freshwater (or other appropriate fluids) available to prevent dehydration?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Were the water depths, bottom time, and tank pressures of each diver recorded after each dive?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Was a dive report prepared that included appropriate information specific to the diving operation (e.g., water depths and bottom times for the dives, tank pressures, achievement of objectives, hazards encountered, malfunctions and lost equipment)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Were appropriate decontamination procedures followed when diving in polluted waters?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Did the divers properly clean and store their equipment when they were not diving or after they had completed the diving operations?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

V. DIVING PERSONNEL AND RECORDS REVIEW

An evaluation of the training, background, and capabilities of each diver involved in the diving operation is of primary importance.

1. Were all divers current with diving physical examinations (within one year)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Were all divers current with CPR and AED certifications?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Were all divers current with first aid training?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Were all divers trained in oxygen administration (initial training only required; two-year refresher recommended)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Were all divers certified for their respective levels of responsibility (i.e., as Scientific Divers or Divemasters)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Were all divers using the air compressor trained in its operation, if one was at the dive site?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Is there record of a rescue drill within the past 12 months (i.e., rescue of an incapacitated diver from the water to the diving platform) been performed?
(*Note: Rescue could involve use of a backboard or stokes litter, harness and tackle system, or winch system for a high dive platform, or a hand lift of the patient and backboard for a low dive platform.*)
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
8. Had all divers maintained their proficiency (i.e., dived within the last three months)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
9. Were all divers experienced with the working conditions that were expected during the project?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
10. If the answer to Nos. 8 or 9 above is negative, what provisions and preparations has the Divemaster undertaken to prepare the diver for the new situation?
Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

VI. DIVE EQUIPMENT

Diving equipment must be maintained according to the requirements in the Diving Safety Policy or the manufacturers' specifications, whichever are the most conservative.

A. SCUBA EQUIPMENT

1. Were all scuba cylinders tested within the 5-year hydrostatic test date?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Had all scuba cylinders been visually inspected within the past 12 months?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. For EPA-owned or -leased compressors, was an air quality test result form obtained within the past 6 months? (Air quality must meet the standard, as cited in Appendix A, No. 22.)
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. If the compressor was not in use for more than one month, was it labeled with "Tagout" or had the air quality been tested before dive operations resumed?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Were all regulators critically examined, calibrated, or overhauled within the past 18 months?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Had all of the diver's gauges (e.g., pressure, depth, compass, bottom timers, and watches) been critically examined and calibrated or replaced within the past 18 months?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Had all valves and hoses been critically examined and replaced or overhauled as needed?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
8. Were all belts and buckles in good condition?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
9. For dry suit diving, were all dry suits leak-free?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
10. Were all buoyancy compensators in good condition and maintained in accordance with manufacturers' specifications?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

11. Were all buoyancy compensators capable of being inflated by two methods (one other than oral)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
12. Had the diver communication equipment been checked prior to use?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
13. Was a dive ladder available for the divers to enter the dive platform? (Some boats are low to the water or have a swim step and do not require a dive ladder.)
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
14. Was hygienic maintenance performed on all full-face masks?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
15. Were all full-face masks free of corrosion and in good operating condition?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
16. Were the head harness and buckles in good condition?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
17. Were the manufacturers' repair and maintenance manuals available for the specialized dive equipment (e.g., the communication equipment and full-face masks)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
18. Was the dive equipment, in general, free of corrosion and in good working condition?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
19. Were adequate spare parts and repair materials available at the dive site?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

EPA Dive Safety Audit Checklist

B. FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

1. Was the emergency oxygen kit capable of servicing two non-breathing divers at the same time?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
2. Did the emergency oxygen kit have an oxygen cylinder that was size "E" (626 liters) or larger?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
3. Had the regulator on the oxygen cylinder been maintained according to the manufacturer's specifications?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
4. Did the oxygen kit contain a cylinder wrench (or wheel) for opening and closing the tank valve?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
5. Were the hoses, valves, and regulators in the oxygen kit in good condition and clean, particularly of oil and grease?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
6. Were the oxygen cylinders within the five-year hydrostatic test date?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
7. Were the valve seats and washer seals in good condition?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
8. Was the oxygen cylinder stored in a manner to prevent excessive temperatures (i.e., where the temperature may exceed 125 degrees Fahrenheit)?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
9. Was an adequately supplied first aid kit (appropriate for the project) available for divers, with the contents stored properly?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
10. Were spare oxygen [washer seals] available?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:
11. Was there a backboard for emergency use on board the survey vessel or in the dive staging area?
 YES NO N/A; Comments:

APPENDIX K

Standard Operating Procedures and Standard Methods

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES AND STANDARD METHODS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- A. Nitrox (Oxygen-Enriched Air) Diving (Minimum Standards for Use)
- B. Polluted/Contaminated Water Diving and Equipment Decon
- C. Underwater Pinger/Locator Use
- D. Underwater Communications
- E. High Altitude Diving > 1,000 ft
- F. Surface Supplied Diving
- G. Tethered Diving
- H. Diver Decontamination

STANDARD METHODS

Generic Dive Plans and Reports, Dive Tender's Log, Semi-Annual Report of Unit Dive Training and Operations, Dive Safe Ship Ops – Checklist, First Aid Kit, EPA Field Emerging Form

A. Nitrox Reference

Reference A: *Nitrox Manual: Complete Guide to Nitrox Diving*, Dick Rutkowski, Hyperbarics International, 490 Caribbean Drive, Key Largo, Florida, 33037, copyright 1994.

Reference B: Incorporated by reference and with copy:

AAUS, *Recommendations and Guidelines for Scientific Nitrox Diving and Nitrox Diver Certification*, September 1991.

Reference C: "Oxygen Toxicity Management in the Field," *Alert Diver*, DAN periodical May/June 2008, pp. 13-14. DAN recommendation for a maximum oxygen partial pressure of 1.4 ATA for open-circuit scuba using nitrogen-oxygen breathing gas mixtures.

B. Polluted/Contaminated Water Diving and Equipment Decontamination

Reference A: NTIS Document No. PB86-128022, EPA Report No. EPA/600/2-85/130, *Interim Protocol for Diving Operations in Contaminated Water*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Cincinnati, Ohio, November 1985.

Reference B: Incorporated by reference and with copy:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Standard Operating Protocol Biohazards of Diving Operations and Aquatic Environments*, prepared in conjunction with the National Underwater Diving Safety Management Program by Jerry J. Tulis, Ph.D.; Ricky L. Langley, M.D., M.P.H.; and Amy M. Gitelman, M.P.H.

PART A
NITROX DIVING STANDARDS

MINIMUM EPA STANDARDS FOR THE USE OF OXYGEN ENRICHED AIR (NITROX) FOR DIVING OPERATIONS

Minimum EPA standards for the use of oxygen-enriched air for EPA-sanctioned diving operations are listed below.

1. A Dive Plan designating a Divemaster, trained and certified in the use of oxygen-enriched air, must be approved by the Unit Diving Officer (UDO).
2. All EPA and EPA-sanctioned divers who use oxygen-enriched air shall be trained and certified by a nationally recognized organization approved by the UDO.
3. Personnel blending or filling high-pressure storage or scuba cylinders and operating high-pressure gas transfer equipment with oxygen-enriched air shall be trained and certified to perform these operations by a nationally recognized organization approved by the UDO. Gas blending must occur prior to filling scuba cylinders or contact with breathing equipment (e.g., an open-circuit regulator). Pre-mixed oxygen-enriched air or Nitrox may be purchased from a licensed, commercial supplier that provides breathing quality gas in accordance with nationally recognized consensus standards.
4. All gas blending and transfer equipment and storage cylinders shall be cleaned and maintained for oxygen service in accordance with nationally recognized consensus standards. This is required only for equipment that may be exposed to oxygen concentrations equal to or greater than 40%.
5. High-pressure scuba cylinders containing oxygen-enriched air shall be color-coded and labeled. The cylinders must be yellow with a 4-inch oxygen green band that extends down from the bottom of the curve at the top of the tank. Each cylinder must have "Oxygen-Enriched Air Only" or "Nitrox Only" in 1-inch oxygen green letters running the length of the cylinder, starting 5 inches from the bottom of the tank. Cylinders marked in accordance with a nationally or internationally recognized Nitrox association may also be used; however, all EPA cylinders will be marked as described above.
6. Two different oxygen analyzers calibrated in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations, must be used to measure the oxygen content of the gas prior to use. The initial measurement shall be taken by the gas vendor or supplier. The second measurement shall be immediately prior to the use of the cylinder. The diver using the cylinder must measure the oxygen content and record the measurement and the scuba tank serial number on the Dive Tender's Log. The diver will also initial this entry.
7. Oxygen-enriched air, containing 32 + 1 % oxygen (i.e., NOAA Nitrox I) with the balance of the gas being mainly nitrogen, is a standard breathing gas mixture. The normal depth limit for use of this mixture shall be 130 feet of seawater for dives that do not require decompression. The gas mixture must be of breathing quality in accordance with nationally recognized consensus standards.
8. Oxygen-enriched air, containing 36 + 1 % oxygen (i.e., NOAA Nitrox II) with the balance of the gas being mainly nitrogen, is a standard breathing gas mixture. The normal depth limit for use of this mixture shall be 110 feet of seawater for dives that do not require decompression. The gas mixture must be of breathing quality in accordance with nationally recognized consensus standards.
9. When diving with oxygen-enriched air, divers shall use diving and decompression tables calculated for the specific gas mixture used (e.g., NOAA Nitrox I or II Diving and Decompression Tables).
10. Oxygen-enriched air exceeding 37% oxygen shall not be used for EPA diving operations.

APPENDIX L

Biohazard Diving Operations
(including decontamination)

NOTES:

US EPA
STANDARD OPERATING PROTOCOL

BIOHAZARDS OF DIVING OPERATIONS AND AQUATIC ENVIRONMENTS

Prepared in Conjunction
with the

NATIONAL UNDERWATER DIVING SAFETY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

by

Jerry J. Tulis, Ph.D., Ricky L. Langley, M.D., M.P.H.,
and Amy M. Gitelman, M.P.H.
Occupational and Environmental Medicine
Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC

for

Office of Administration and Resources Management
Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division
Washington, D.C.
September 1994

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1. PURPOSE

This Standard Operating Practice (SOP) prescribes the protocols to help safeguard personnel from the Biohazards of Diving Operations and Aquatic Environments recommended under the Environmental Protection Agency's Underwater/Diving Safety Management Program. The user should also reference the EPA's National Biohazard Risk Management Program for additional information and guidance on the more typical biohazards. This SOP document focuses on those biohazards which may be unique to or at higher risk for participants in the EPA's Diving Program.

This SOP sets forth the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA or Agency) procedures for minimizing its worker's occupational exposure to biohazards in the underwater and diving operations environment. In many cases, the hazards involved in dive operations are the same conditions EPA workers may encounter in land based operations but may also include hazards unique to the aquatic environment. As with any field operation, marine and dive operations involve aspects of physical activity which may result in injury leading to infection. The potential for lacerations or abrasions which may become infected from microorganisms is commonplace in the handling of the diving and marine equipment and supplies. Shore based operations are subject to the typical hazards of animal and insect bites or stings and poisonous plants (e.g., poison ivy) and may be referenced in the National Biohazard Risk Management Program.

Diving operations may also introduce risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens in conducting first responder activities for and injured diver or the sharing of diving equipment. However small the risk, employers are required to train and make provisions for adherence to the OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.1030 "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" promulgated as a final rule on December 6, 1991.

Additional potential for infection exists from the aquatic environment, both fresh and saltwater, such as exposure to biohazards from waterborne microorganisms, plants and animals which may be encountered in diving operations. The SOP defines the protocols by which the Agency's policy concerning the protection of its workers from occupational biohazards in diving is effected.

Standard Operating Practices (SOPs), maintained under the National Underwater Diving Safety Management Program in another document, establish the general approaches and work practices which are implemented at the operations level to achieve the various requirements of the Program in laboratory, field, and other settings.

Standard Methods (SMs), maintained under the SOP's in separate documents, detail the specific procedures and techniques which are employed in the conduct of certain work activities.

The Program, and its associated SOPs and SMs, incorporate nationally accepted and consistent means and methods for planning and conducting underwater and diving activities to minimize the potential hazards associated with these activities.

An operating principle of EPA Programs is to demonstrate continuous and measurable improvement in its management and operations, using Total Quality Management (TQM) processes. As such, user of the procedures indicated here may suggest alternative methods for effecting the required outcome. The alternate method, however, should not be implemented until approved and amended by the EPA's Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Directorate.

The purpose of the Biohazards of Diving Operations and Aquatic Environments document is to provide an awareness of potential workplace biohazards to employees and to help protect these employees while performing

duties that involve exposure to marine and inland waters and aquatic life, as related to the collection of water, sediment, and sludge samples; acquisition of marine and freshwater specimens; and while conducting various diving procedures.

2. BACKGROUND

Water covers more than seventy percent of the Earth's surface, and numerous vocational activities involve exposure to these waters and their inhabitants. All oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and ponds contain a wide variety of indigenous microorganisms, in addition to higher forms of aquatic life. Although the majority of these indigenous organisms are harmless to humans, there are dangerous and life-threatening life forms found in all the waters of the world. Besides these normal inhabitants of marine waters, contamination of "pristine" water from various sources poses an increased hazard to exposed persons. These sources of contamination include human and animal sewage, industrial wastes, agricultural wastes, and other forms of pollution. Numerous species of animal viruses, bacteria, fungi, algae, and parasites are found in sewage effluents, often dumped into oceans and lakes as raw sewage.

The injuries frequently experienced during marine operations, including lacerations and punctures, are readily contaminated with microorganisms, potentially leading to infection. In addition, exposure of mucous membranes of the eyes (i.e., conjunctiva), nose (i.e., rhinal exposure), and mouth; exposure of the ear canal ; and the swallowing and aspiration of contaminated water can lead to serious infections and intoxications.

A hierarchy of protective measures can be used to eliminate or significantly reduce exposures to marine biohazards. Included are accepted and proven engineering operations, good work practices, and the use of personal protective equipment. An adjunct to these measures of protection against infectious microorganisms and animal toxins is the use of vaccines and other prophylactic biologicals (preventative medicines).

It is accepted practice that various diving operations involve the use of shared equipment, which can become contaminated with blood and other body fluids due to the frequent lacerations, other traumatic injuries, and the confined space being encountered during diving operations. Consequently, the possibility of transmission of human diseases from one diver to another exists, especially for diseases such as hepatitis B, tuberculosis, herpes, and HIV. Information is provided in this document on the appropriate precautions and other measures that should be practiced to eliminate or reduce the potential for disease transmission when using shared diving equipment.

3. STANDARD OPERATING PRACTICE

- a. SCOPE. This Practice applies to all personnel as outlined in the parent policy statement (i.e., National Underwater Diving Safety Management Program) and may apply to the employees or agents of other government agencies or contractors, when performing duties at EPA facilities or at EP A-controlled sites. All personnel are required to comply with:

- the minimum standards of this Practice; and
- the more conservative of this Practice or the employee's organization's procedures.

Contractors, grantees, and organizations with which the EPA has agreements must comply with applicable

federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to underwater diving and exposure to biohazards. This SOP is issued in part under OSHA's requirement to 29 CFR 1910.1030. "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens".

- b. OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY. The provisions for worker safety and health regarding biohazards established by this Practice may be augmented or supplemented by local EPA managers, **but it cannot be deleted, replaced, or superseded**. This clause is intended to provide for a degree of flexibility at the operational level in unique or special non-routine field situations, without compromising or diminishing the level of worker protection afforded by this Practice.
- c. BASIC RESPONSIBILITY. Basic responsibility, while carrying out this Practice, rests with the individual. To conduct diving operations in light of the potential of occupational exposure to biohazards, an employee shall demonstrate to the Unit Diving Officer or designee an understanding of the hazards that allows the employee to operate safely. Staff and line management shall be responsible for providing the resources necessary to protect against biohazards.
- d. SOP REQUIREMENT. EPA programs frequently involve the need for competent underwater operations even as a potential for exposure to biohazards exists. As the business of the EPA involves investigation of environmental contamination, personnel will occasionally be tasked with these investigations in the underwater environment. The existence of an EPA Diving Program to meet these needs is vital to safe, efficient, and economic operations.
- e. SOP PURPOSE. The purposes of the Standard Operating Practice for operating with the understanding of Biohazards of Diving Operations and Aquatic Environments are:
 - Safety - to ensure that all diving under the auspices of the Environmental Protection Agency is conducted in a manner most likely to minimize accidental injury or occupational illness;
 - Operational Standards - to set forth reasonable rules, regulations and standards for selection, training, certification, supervision, and equipping of EPA divers; and
 - Reciprocity - to establish a working reciprocity among staff in various Regional, Unit Offices and
 - Laboratories within EPA; and between EPA and other government agencies, academic institutions,
 - and private concerns involved in diving.

4. SOP COMPONENTS

a. SOP ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. Health and Safety Office

The responsibility for employee health and safety while performing assigned tasks in the aquatic environment will reside with the regional Health and Safety Office and the Unit Diving Officers, with the

collaboration of the EPA's Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division (SHEMD). Information and training will be provided to employees on the presence of aquatic biohazards, especially those indigenous to the U.S. Moreover, training must include information on the cause of potential infectious diseases and envenomations (poisonings), the clinical onset and symptoms of specific diseases, measures for prevention and control of exposure, and accepted treatment modalities (methods of therapy). Specific information on the proper cleaning and disinfection of diving equipment is mandatory.

2. Healthcare Provider

The healthcare provider will give medical assistance to injured and ill workers, maintain injury and infection records of the employees, immunize employees as indicated and keep vaccination records, provide periodic serologic testing to establish immune status and infectivity, conduct skin testing to monitor exposures to certain infectious agents (e.g., tuberculosis), and conduct periodic physical examinations on employees.

3. Management

The employer maintains the full responsibility for assuring that all employees whose assignments require exposure to aquatic environments in the performance of their duties are provided the optimal protection possible against exposure to both indigenous pathogens and those associated with polluted waters.

b. PRACTICE ELEMENTS

1. Occupational Biohazards of Aquatic Environments

Numerous potential health hazards affect individuals performing marine operations. These hazards can be segregated into four categories, namely,

- a) hazards associated with the process of diving, due primarily to the effect of external pressure on gases within the body,
- b) hazards associated with the environment, including biological agents, toxins, and dangerous marine life,
- c) hazards associated with the equipment, e.g., contaminated air supply, equipment contaminated with biological fluids and exudates, and allergic responses to diving equipment materials, and
- d) hazards associated with the collection and processing of environmental samples and aquatic specimens.

It is important that the individual involved with diving or specimen collection and processing be cognizant of the potential hazards involved in these operations and that they always perform their tasks as safely as possible to reduce or eliminate injury or illness. While this document deals primarily with the biohazards associated with diving and other aquatic operations, brief mention will be made of the potential adverse medical problems related to diving per se and from the equipment being used.

a. Infectious Microorganisms

All bodies of water worldwide, including saltwater and freshwater, contain numerous species of microorganisms. Some of these microorganisms represent indigenous organisms and others represent contaminating organisms, from sewage, industrial and agricultural wastes, and human and animal shedding.

Both the indigenous and contaminating microorganisms contain species associated with human disease (i.e., pathogenic for man), including viruses, bacteria, fungi, algae, and parasites. Among the many species of microorganisms found in aquatic environments are the psychrophilic organisms (temperature range of -5 to 30C), mesophilic organisms (temperature range of 10 to 45C), thermophilic organisms (temperature optimum of 50 to 60C), nonhalophilic organisms (ability to grow in both fresh and saltwater), and halophilic organisms (require saline environment for growth).

Human exposures to waterborne pathogenic and opportunistic microorganisms most often result in illnesses such as gastroenteritis (i.e., inflammation of the stomach and intestines), respiratory disease, wound infections, otitis externa (infection of the external ear canal), conjunctivitis (i.e., infection of the conjunctiva of the eyes), and sinusitis. However, more serious sequelae (consequences) and life-threatening complications can occur. In addition, during "diving operations" workers may be exposed to the blood or body fluids of coworkers as a result of sharing equipment, thereby facilitating the transmission of disease agents. Exposure of workers in the aquatic environment most often occurs through contact (i.e., skin, eyes, ears), penetrating injuries, and respiration, especially during aspiration of contaminated water. A schematic of possible modes of disease transmission while working in the aquatic environment is presented as **Figure 1**. A listing of the biohazards encountered during diving operations are presented in **Table 1**. Some of the more important viruses, bacteria, fungi, algae, and parasites associated with waterborne disease or diving operations are briefly discussed in this document, other less important pathogens are presented in the Appendices.

1. Viruses

Numerous viruses can be found in marine and inland waters, especially when polluted with sewage. More than 100 different viruses are found in human and animal wastes that can contaminate aquatic environments. Enteric viruses (i.e., those viruses originating from the intestinal tract) are found at concentrations of 1 million virus particles per gram of feces. Sewage levels of approximately 7,000 viruses per liter are common, with levels in parts of the world reaching more than 500,000 virus particles per liter of sewage. Viruses contaminating the oceans, seas, lakes and other bodies of water through the dumping or release of sewage possess a variable survival in these aquatic environments, i.e., viruses are obligate intracellular parasites and cannot replicate without specific animal host cells. Survival of free viruses in seawater is a function of both the specific virus and the environmental conditions. Studies have indicated that survival is enhanced significantly by lower water temperature and the presence of sediments. Enteroviruses such as polio and Coxsackie have been shown to survive from 1 to 3 months in seawater, depending on the season, i.e., summer or winter, respectively. The bacteria found in seawater also affect the survival of viruses by releasing antiviral metabolites that rapidly inactivate viruses. In sewage treatment plants, the use of chlorination is only moderately effective in viral inactivation.

The knowledge that viruses can survive for many weeks upon release to marine or fresh waters is important for the understanding and application of exposure and infection control practices. Moreover, besides the viruses that are associated with shedding and the release of sewage that contribute to the pollution of aquatic systems, there are viruses that inhabit marine life as either indigenous commensals (an intestinal symbiont) or pathogens that can infect man or contaminate seafood.

The virus groups recognized as sewage-associated waterborne organisms that pose a risk to humans are the following:

- adenoviruses
- enteroviruses

- hepatitis viruses
- parvoviruses
- reoviruses
- rotaviruses
- astroviruses
- calciviruses

Viruses that are transmissible through blood and other body fluids could potentially pose a risk to divers sharing equipment that becomes contaminated with these fluids. Included are:

- hepatitis B (HBV)
- hepatitis C (HCV)
- human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- cytomegalovirus (CMV)
- Epstein-Barr virus (EBV)
- hemorrhagic fever viruses

A brief discussion of the more important sewage-associated viruses (i.e., adenoviruses, hepatitis A, and polio) and blood borne pathogens (i.e., HBV and HIV) found in aquatic environments and marine operations follows; a complete list of relevant viruses and the diseases caused is found in Appendix I.

- a. **Adenoviruses** are primarily associated with infections of the conjunctiva, respiratory system, and intestinal tract. There exist in excess of 40 serotypes of human adenoviruses.

The transmission of adenoviral infections is primarily through the fecal-oral route and by contact, with fecal shedding continuing for months or years after initial infection. Ocular infections have been associated with exposure to fecally-contaminated water, resulting in sporadic or epidemic outbreaks of pharyngoconjunctival fever (PCF). Disease onset is abrupt, with sore throat, fever, and conjunctivitis; accompanying headache, malaise, nausea, and diarrhea are common. In adults, the disease is milder than among children, and primarily involves the eyes. Complete recovery occurs in several weeks.

- b. **Hepatitis A** is usually spread through the fecal-oral route, i.e., through sewage-contaminated water and food, including seafood, and by contact. The virus can survive in both salt and fresh water. Clinical symptoms include fatigue, fever, nausea, malaise, and jaundice. The disease is self-limiting, with a fatality rate of less than 0.1%. No chronicity (i.e., associated with cirrhosis and carcinoma of the liver) or carrier state develops, as can occur with hepatitis B and C infections. Prophylaxis with immune globulin is recommended for travel to endemic areas; a vaccine is currently in clinical evaluation.

- c. **Hepatitis B** is usually spread through contact with contaminated blood or body fluids or as a sexually-transmitted disease. Clinical disease presents with fever, malaise, and jaundice. Serious sequelae include liver disease and cancer; a carrier state may develop. Risks for divers and other marine workers include exposure to contaminated diving equipment and working in polluted waters. Highly effective vaccines are available that are mandated by the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard for workers at risk of exposure to blood or body fluids.

- d. **Human Immunodeficiency Virus** is responsible for the clinical condition recognized as Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). HIV is transmissible in the occupational setting by accidental needlestick, mucous membrane exposure, or viral contact with broken skin (e.g., eczema). Infections usually remain latent for many years, ultimately leading to a variety of life-threatening AIDS-defined clinical conditions, including opportunistic infections (e.g., candidiasis, pneumocystis) and cancer. Among employees whose tasks involve diving

operations with the use of shared equipment, the opportunity for exposure to the blood and/or body fluids of coworkers exists, unless the equipment is scrupulously cleaned and disinfected after each use. No vaccine or proven chemotherapy are available.

e. **Enteroviruses** include the virus responsible for human poliomyelitis, which is transmitted through the fecal-oral route. During the gastrointestinal phase of infection, copious quantities of poliovirus are shed in the feces; this phase of infection may last for months. With proper sewage management, the poliovirus is inactivated; where sewage management is minimal or absent, the poliovirus remains viable in the environmental setting for months. Transmission takes place through consumption of contaminated water or food, or exposure to virus-contaminated vectors (e.g., flies). Most infections remain asymptomatic, with approximately one paralytic case for every 100-150 infections. Highly effective live and inactivated vaccine preparations against poliomyelitis are available. In less developed regions of the world, poliomyelitis remains a serious public health problem.

2. Bacteria

Although certain bacterial species exist as indigenous microflora in the aquatic environment, the primary sources of waterborne bacteria associated with human infection comes from sewage effluents. Raw and treated sewage contains numerous species of bacteria, some of which are human pathogens. The majority of bacteria found in aquatic environments are enteric organisms (i.e., gram-negative species). Other contaminating bacterial species are comprised of the gram-positive organisms (e.g., staphylococci and streptococci) and the acid-fast organisms (i.e., the mycobacteria).

In addition to the bacteria that are found in the aquatic environment, there are other potentially infectious organisms that could be associated with the sharing of diving equipment. Among these bacteria are the causative agents of tuberculosis, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which is readily liberated in the expelled air of clinically ill individuals, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, an opportunistic bacterium associated with otitis externa and other potentially serious infections.

A brief discussion of the more important bacterial pathogens associated with aquatic environments and marine operations follows, including *Aeromonas*, *Campylobacter*, *Erysipelothrix*, *Mycobacterium*, *Pseudomonas*, *Vibrio*, *Salmonella*, *Leptospira*, and *Legionella*. A complete list of aquatic bacterial pathogens and the diseases caused is found in Appendix II.

a. ***Aeromonas*** species are comprised of gram-negative rod-shaped bacteria found as natural inhabitants of freshwater, where they are responsible for infection among cold-blooded animals (e.g., frogs). They can survive in both fresh and salt water, and have been isolated from many harbor waters. The motile species, i.e., *A. hydrophila*, *A. caviae*, and *A. sobria*, are associated with human diseases such as soft tissue infections and gastroenteritis by either penetrating trauma or ingestion, aspiration may result in respiratory infection and septicemia (blood poisoning). Puncture wounds contaminated with *Aeromonas* can develop cellulitis within 8 hours, with erythema (reddening), edema (swelling), and a purulent discharge (pus). Localized pain is considerable; fever, chills, and lymphangitis (inflammation of the lymph nodes) may occur. *Aeromonas* infections are treatable with a variety of antimicrobials; therapy for serious infections should include an aminoglycoside.

b. ***Campylobacter*** species are found worldwide as commensals (intestinal symbiont) in a large number of wild and domestic animals. Species responsible for human infection include *C. jejuni*, which has the broadest animal reservoir, *C. coli*, and *C. fetus*. Outbreaks of disease have been associated with the consumption of contaminated food or water, and the fecal-oral route has been implicated in person-to-person spread. The disease is diagnosed more frequently in children than adults, and may account for about 9% of all diarrheal cases. Several clinical forms of *C. jejuni* disease exist, from the most common enteritis of 1-7 days duration with fever, headache, abdominal pain, and diarrhea, to an acute colitis with fever, abdominal cramps, and bloody diarrhea. *C. fetus* presents less frequently with enteric disease, more often as an acute bacteremia. Most *C. jejuni* infections are self-limiting;

effective antimicrobial therapy is available.

c. *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* is the causative bacterium of erysipeloid in humans, where it occurs primarily as an occupational disease. Common names for erysipeloid are fish-handler's disease, crayfish poisoning, speck finger, and blubber finger. *E. rhusiopathiae* is a gram-positive organism found as a normal inhabitant of many wild and domestic animals, birds, and fish. The organisms are found in the surface slime of both saltwater and freshwater fishes. Human infections usually occur on the hands at the site of skin injury as nonsuppurative purplish erythematous lesions (purple-red rashes), associated with pain and itching. Most infections are self-limiting, although complications including endocarditis (inflammation of the heart's interior lining) can occur. Antibiotics provide effective treatment.

d. *Mycobacterium marinum* is an acid-fast, rod-shaped mycobacterium that is responsible for granulomatous skin lesions, which occur primarily at skin sites associated with prior abrasions, e.g., elbows, knees, toes, and fingers. The organism is widely distributed in nature, occurring in soil, water, and fish. The clinical infection begins several weeks after exposure, as small papules that enlarge and ulcerate with a purulent discharge. Complete healing, which is spontaneous in most cases, requires several months to two years. Antimicrobial therapy is available.

e. *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the causative bacterium of tuberculosis, is spread from person-to-person by contaminated aerosols released through the coughing of clinically-ill individuals. Expelled sputum and phlegm can contaminate the interior surfaces of diving equipment. The dried deposits of these body fluids could become aerosolized, thereby contaminating the captive air within the diving suit with the tubercle bacillus. The microorganisms in these potentially-infectious aerosols remain viable for long periods of time, and with the infectious dose of tuberculosis being extremely small, i.e., 1-10 organisms, the situation could theoretically occur whereby infection of coworkers would occur. Active tuberculosis is characterized by pulmonary involvement, with persistent cough, night sweats, weight loss, and enlargement of lymph nodes. Chemotherapeutic regimens are available and recommended. Periodic tuberculin skin testing should be used to determine the prevalence and incidence of tuberculosis among at-risk workers.

f. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, a gram-negative bacillus, is the primary cause of otitis externa (i.e., swimmer's ear) after exposure to water. The disease is common among divers as a result of altered flora of the ear canal due to prolonged water exposure, and will prevent workers from diving. Dermatologic and eye infections occur; pneumonia and urinary tract infections have been reported. Treatment for otitis externa generally involves the use of antibiotic-steroid ear drops. Serious complications can occur in compromised individuals.

Vibrio species are ubiquitous inhabitants of both saltwater and freshwater, with at least 34 identified species, 11 of which are human pathogens. The majority of human infections are generally caused by the following three species:

- V. cholerae*
- V. parahaemolyticus*
- V. vulnificus*

Vibrio species responsible primarily for gastroenteritis resulting from fecal-oral transmission or ingestion of polluted water include:

- V. cholerae*
- V. parahaemolyticus*
- V. mimicus*
- V. hollisae*
- V. fluvialis*
- V. furnissii*

Vibrio species responsible for soft-tissue infections, otitis, and sepsis resulting from penetrating trauma or contact include:

- V. vulnificus*
- V. alginolyticus*
- V. damsela*
- V. metchnikovii*
- V. cincinnatiensis*

Although the vibrios do exist naturally in the aquatic environment, the contribution of fecal contamination from infected individuals and carriers is difficult to ignore in endemic and epidemic regions of the world, especially where sanitation is inadequate or absent.

g. *Vibrio cholerae*, a nonhalophilic organism, has been associated with seven pandemics of cholera since 1817, with epidemics underway in several parts of the world today. Enteric infections occur primarily through the consumption of or exposure to contaminated water or food, especially uncooked seafood. Clinical disease typically includes severe diarrhea with dehydration; possible serious sequelae include coma, convulsions, and death. The disease is endemic and epidemic in Southeast Asia, Africa, India, the Middle East, Southern Europe, Central and South America, and the Oceanic Islands. A short-lived and moderately effective vaccine is available and may be required by certain countries.

h. *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, a halophilic organism, is found worldwide as a major cause of gastroenteritis from the consumption of sea food (e.g., Japanese s u m m e r diarrhea). The organism has been isolated from seawater, sediment, suspended particulates, and marine life. The majority of infections worldwide occur during the warm summer months. Human infections result primarily from the eating o f raw seafood (e.g., oysters and sushi) or undercooked seafood (e.g., crabs, shrimp, and lobsters). Wounds exposed to the marine environment can become infected with *V. parahaemolyticus*, resulting in a cellulitis, and ocular and ear infections have been reported. Serious sequelae such as septicemia, pneumonia, and osteomyelitis are rare. Recovery is usually spontaneous after several days; antimicrobial therapy is available.

i. *Vibrio vulnificus*, a halophilic organism, is an insidious and highly invasive marine pathogen, that causes three distinct clinical disease syndromes, namely,

(1) wound infections from contact with seawater or the handling of shellfish; these infections, either from the contamination of pre-existing wounds or injury in the marine environment, may become edematous (swollen) and erythematous (red) within hours, accompanied by lymphadenopathy. Intense pain occurs at the infected site, with fever, chills, and nausea; complications, especially in persons with underlying disease, result in a fatality rate of 7-22%. Antibiotic treatment should be administered promptly.

(2) a primary septicemia, with malaise, fever, chills, vomiting, diarrhea, prostration, and a mortality rate of 50%, especially among individuals with pre-existing liver disease that consume raw seafood; antibiotic treatment should be administered promptly, and

(3) an acute, self-limiting diarrhea from the consumption of raw seafo o d.

Salmonella species found as waterborne pathogens may cause three distinct clinical diseases, namely,

(1) a self-limiting gastroenteritis,

(2) a septicemia, and

(3) an enteric fever (i.e., typhoid fever).

The salmonellae can survive in seawater for several weeks. Several thousand serotypes of *Salmonella* exist; the most relevant serotypes associated with human infections are:

S. serotype typhi, responsible for typhoid fever

S. serotype typhimurium, causes gastroenteritis

- S. serotype enteritidis, causes gastroenteritis, and
- S. serotype choleraesuis, causes septicemia.

j. **Salmonella serotype typhi** is solely carried by humans; it is spread through the fecal-oral route, and by the consumption of contaminated water and food. In the US and other developed countries, the control of carriers, chlorination of water, sewage management, and prophylactic vaccination have kept typhoid fever under control, with approximately 70% of US cases acquired during travel to endemic areas outside of the US. Among the developing countries, waterborne transmission represents the major route of infection. Typhoid fever may be prolonged, lasting about three weeks, with fever, malaise, lethargy, constipation, diarrhea, and bacteremia. The mortality rate is 2-10%, with a relapse rate of 20%. Antimicrobial therapy is available. A recently developed live oral vaccine is considered efficacious and should be used for prophylaxis against typhoid fever.

k. **Leptospira interrogans**, the causative bacterium of leptospirosis, is contracted by contact with infected animals or contaminated water; the bacteria enter the body through a skin break or through mucous membranes. Numerous wild and domestic animals act as reservoirs, and may represent the major source of human infection. Swimming, wading, bathing, diving, or other contact with water in ponds, streams, and reservoirs that are contaminated with animal urine from infected animals is frequently the source of human infections, sometimes resulting in outbreaks of illness. Onset of clinical disease is abrupt and influenza-like; serious sequelae include liver, kidney, and central nervous system involvement. The disease occurs worldwide, especially during the summer months in temperate climates and as an endemic disease in the tropics. Effective antimicrobial therapy is available; prophylactic use of antimicrobials among high-risk occupational groups is recommended.

l. **Legionella**, the causative bacterium of legionellosis and Pontiac fever, is comprised of at least 29 species, although approximately 70% of human infections are due to *L. pneumophila*. Legionnaires' disease has been reported worldwide, both as endemic outbreaks and sporadic cases. The natural habitat for the legionellae is water, including ponds, lakes, water cooling towers, showers, nebulizers, whirlpools, etc., with transmission occurring primarily from contaminated aerosols. The legionellae can survive and multiply in tap water for longer than one year; hyperchlorination is required for microbial inactivation. This opportunistic pathogen generally afflicts individuals with specific risk factors (e.g., elevated age, smoking, alcohol consumption). Two distinct clinical conditions have been described, namely, (1) legionnaires' disease, an influenza-like illness that can lead to systemic disease, with extensive pulmonary involvement, respiratory failure, and death, and (2) Pontiac fever, a self-limiting influenza-like illness without pneumonia. No vaccine is available; antibiotic therapy is recommended.

3. Fungi

The most common fungal infections associated with the aquatic environment are the dermatophytoses, caused by a large group of fungi collectively known as dermatophytes or "ringworm" fungi. Another less frequently encountered fungal infection associated with polluted waters is pseudallescheriasis.

a. **Epidermophyton**, **Microsporium**, and **Trichophyton** are the fungal genera responsible for the dermatophytoses; 24 species are currently recognized. Tinea pedis is ringworm of the feet or athlete's foot, particularly affecting the interdigital webs and soles. Infection can occur by contact with wet floors or decks, e.g., in communal showers and bathing facilities. The infection typically results in a nuisance infection, although if untreated, can progress to lymphadenitis. Antifungal medications are readily available, many as nonprescription drugs.

b. **Pseudallescheria boydii** is the causative fungal agent of pseudallescheriasis. The fungus has been isolated from various environmental sources, including soil, polluted water, sewage, waterlogged pastures, swamps, algae, and animal manure. Numerous local and systemic diseases have been attributed to *P. boydii*, including sinusitis, meningitis, cerebral abscess, pulmonary involvement, endocarditis, arthritis, and cutaneous granulomata. Invasive disease from near drowning due to aspiration of polluted water has been documented; most infected patients experienced brain abscesses and a fatal outcome. Traumatic implantation of *P. boydii* in healthy individuals has

resulted in chronic, localized infections of soft tissue, bone, and the cornea. Chemotherapy with the imidazoles appears effective.

4. Algae

Protothecosis is an uncommon algal infection caused by two species of the genus *Prototheca*, namely, *P. zopfii* and *P. wickerhamii*. Although rare, cases have been reported from all regions of the world, including the southeast U.S. Species of *Prototheca* have been isolated from both marine and freshwater, aquatic sediments, soil, and foods contaminated with polluted water, soil, or animal feces. Infections involve the soft tissues of the extremities resulting from penetrating trauma and exposure of existing lesions with contaminated water or soil. The course of infection is extremely indolent (slow to occur), lasting months or years, with little evidence of self-healing. Chemotherapy is available.

5. Parasites

Various human and animal parasites are found as contaminants of both marine and freshwaters worldwide. The majority of parasitic infections from exposure to the aquatic environment are the result of contact with or ingestion of fecally-contaminated water or food. A brief discussion of some of the more important parasitic infections of humans that are associated with fecally-polluted water, namely amebiasis, giardiasis, schistosomiasis, and cryptosporidiosis, follows. Additionally, information on amoebic meningitis, a serious waterborne disease caused by exposure to a free-living pathogenic amoeba is presented. A complete listing of aquatic parasites associated with human disease is found in Appendix III.

a. *Entamoeba histolytica* is the protozoan parasite responsible for amebic dysentery or "Montezuma's revenge." About 400 million persons worldwide are infected; 100 million have acute or chronic disease. Thus, the majority of infected persons have asymptomatic disease. *E. histolytica* normally lives and multiplies in the large intestine of infected humans, but may assume a more pathogenic form and invade the tissues. Clinical disease is associated with acute diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, chills, and headache. Cysts are the only infective form; they are excreted with the feces and remain somewhat tolerant of environmental conditions (e.g., they survive in feces and cool water for 1-2 weeks). Transmission is primarily through fecally-contaminated water and food; insects often act as carriers of the infective cysts. The prevalence of amebiasis varies, with 5% infectivity in the US and 40% in tropical areas of the world. Drug treatment is available.

b. *Giardia lamblia* is the parasitic protozoan responsible for giardiasis, an intestinal infestation that occurs worldwide, especially in warmer climates. The disease is readily transmitted to others, especially where sanitary conditions are not observed. The route of transmission is fecal-oral, and one index case can infect hundreds of individuals through the contamination of food or water. Several animals, including dogs and beavers, act as reservoirs of disease, and may be responsible for the contamination of streams and other inland waters. Clinical disease is associated with foul-smelling stools and anorexia, and although not fatal, the disease can prove extremely discomforting. Drug treatment is available and recommended for symptomatic cases.

c. *Schistosoma* species, including *S. haematobium*, *S. mansoni*, and *S. japonicum*, have been recognized as human parasites since antiquity. The clinical disease, schistosomiasis, occurs worldwide in tropical regions of Africa, the Caribbean, South America, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and India. In excess of 200 million people worldwide are infected. The larval fluke (i.e., worm) responsible for schistosomiasis is transmitted from contaminated freshwater to humans by penetrating the "unbroken" skin; a freshwater snail acts as the intermediate host. After penetration, the larvae mature and the host experiences a rash, fever, malaise, cough, abdominal pain, and nausea; bloody diarrhea and enlargement of the liver can occur. The deposition of human waste in bodies of water containing the intermediate snail host is the single most important epidemiologic finding. Drug treatment is

available.

d. ***Cryptosporidium*** is the protozoan parasite responsible for cryptosporidiosis, which is transmitted by contact and through the ingestion of contaminated water. Outbreaks and epidemics have been reported, with fecal-oral transmission implicated. Animals can act as reservoirs. Clinical symptoms include watery diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, and anorexia. The parasite is found worldwide, with normal water chlorination proving ineffective in its destruction. Treatment is supportive and includes rehydration therapy and maintenance of proper electrolyte balance.

e. ***Naegleria fowleri*** is a pathogenic free-living amoeba that causes a disease called primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) or amoebic meningitis among previously healthy individuals. The amoebae enter the nasal passages while individuals are submerged (i.e., swimming or diving) in warm freshwater harboring *N. fowleri*; only a few amoebae are required for infection to occur. The amoebae migrate up the nasal mucosa, penetrate the cribriform plate, and enter the cranium, where a rapidly fatal encephalitic disease ensues. Symptoms include fever, severe headache, vomiting, confusion, delirium, and coma. Although these amoeba are ubiquitous, infections remain rare. Diving in suspect warm and polluted freshwater should be avoided; hyperchlorination destroys the amoebae.

b. **Dermatoses**

Various microscopic and macroscopic aquatic animals are responsible for the initiation of dermatologic problems among persons exposed to marine life while swimming, wading, or diving in fresh or seawater. A list of the recognized aquatic animals responsible for dermatitis is found as Appendix IV; several of the more important organisms associated with dermatologic reactions in humans are discussed below.

1. **Schistosome Dermatitis**, also called cercarial dermatitis or "swimmer's itch", is caused by the penetration of the skin with nonhuman schistosomes, i.e., microscopic immature larval forms of schistosomal flatworms of birds and other nonhuman animals. Cutaneous infestation occurs worldwide, both from salt and freshwater and in all geographic regions. Cercarial dermatitis primarily affects exposed areas of the body; symptoms include a prickling sensation, itching, and the appearance of a red maculopapular rash. Complications include secondary bacterial infections. Brisk toweling immediately after leaving the water may be helpful in preventing infestation. Niclosamide applied to the skin may prevent cercarial penetration; dimethyl phthalate has been reported as an effective cercarial repellent.

2. **Cymothoidism**, or sea louse dermatitis, is caused by the bite of free-swimming crustaceans or cymothoids, i.e., sea lice that live as parasites on invertebrates and fish. They are found in the shoal waters of both tropical and temperate shore lines, where they are buried in the sandy bottom. The cymothoids will attack any organism near their domain, including humans. Sea lice can quickly attach to any prey and inflict sharp bites that result in hemorrhagic wounds. Cymothoids are commonly found along the southern California coast. Wounds should be cleansed with hydrogen peroxide and an antibiotic ointment should be applied.

3. **Seabather's Eruption**, also known as "sea poisoning," "sea critters," and "ocean itch" is caused by a group of marine animals known as cnidarians that possess tentacles with stinging nematocysts. The majority of outbreaks have been recorded in South Florida and the Caribbean and have been attributed to the larval form of the thimble jellyfish, *Linuche unguiculata*. These larvae are barely visible, appearing like finely ground pepper, and are trapped by bathing suits and diving apparel. Skin lesions range from a barely discernable macular rash to a generalized maculopapular and vesicular eruption; urticarial lesions have been reported. The dermatitis is associated with intense itching; other symptoms include nausea, diarrhea, chills, weakness, difficulty in sleeping, muscle spasms, and general malaise. Treatment includes the use of antihistamines and hydrocortisone creams, with epinephrine for extensive eruptions.

4. **Seaweed Dermatitis** is caused by exposure to the seaweed *Lyngbya majusculata*, a common blue-green algae found throughout the Pacific, Indian, and Caribbean oceans. Swimmers and divers exposed to toxic varieties of *L. majusculata* develop an erythematous dermatitis (reddened skin rash) associated with stinging, burning, and

itching. These dermal sensations may develop within minutes to hours after exposure. The rash may progress to an escharotic (burn scabbing) blistering dermatitis, especially in perianal, perineal, or scrotal areas. Oral, ocular, and mucous membrane lesions have been reported, as well as a facial rash and conjunctivitis, possibly associated with exposure to aerosolized seaweed fragments. Seaweed dermatitis is treated symptomatically with cool compresses and topical steroids. Washing with soap and water upon leaving the water may prevent the development of dermatologic problems.

5. **Cutaneous Larva Migrans**, also known as creeping eruption, sandworm, and plumber's itch, is caused by exposure of the skin to the filariform larvae of nonhuman hookworms (e.g., dogs, cats, and raccoons). The sources of human infection include soil and sand contaminated with animal feces; e.g., exposure of bare feet or other body parts to contaminated beach sand above the high water mark or beneath beach houses. Infections occur worldwide, especially in tropical and subtropical areas, e.g., along the coast of Florida and the Gulf of Mexico in the US. Upon penetration of the skin, the nonhuman larvae cannot complete their normal life cycle, although they can remain under the skin for months. Symptoms begin immediately after penetration, with a red papule at the site of entry, which becomes enlarged and vesicular. The embedded larvae can move up to several centimeters per day, leaving torturous tracks with extreme itching. Treatment is both systemic and topical. The wearing of sandals and other protective clothing is recommended in potentially contaminated areas.

c. **Intoxications**

Numerous toxins are produced by dinoflagellates in the marine environment that may cause severe illness in humans; most are the result of injection of the toxin. In addition, bioaccumulation of dinoflagellate toxins occurs in filter-feeding marine animals such as oysters and clams. Consumption of contaminated oysters and other marine animals, especially when eaten raw, can cause intoxication, with symptoms ranging from numbness of the extremities, headache, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea in milder cases to muscle paralysis, respiratory distress, memory impairment, and occasional death in severe cases.

Exposure of divers and other personnel engaged in marine operations most often occurs through the inhalation of aerosolized dinoflagellate toxins. The unarmored dinoflagellate *Ptychodiscus brevis* is associated with "red tide" outbreaks, with fish kills and human exposures taking place during algal blooms. Ocean waves tend to lyse the dinoflagellates, thereby releasing the toxin which can become airborne along coastal areas. The released toxins possess both a hemolytic and a neurotoxic effect. Symptoms of respiratory exposure include conjunctivitis, rhinitis (runny nose), bronchitis, and respiratory irritation. The use of respiratory protection and goggles should limit exposure. Treatment is supportive.

d. **Envenomations**

Numerous varieties of aquatic animals can envenomate divers and other workers while engaged in marine and fresh water operations. Both vertebrate and invertebrate animals can be involved in envenomation, using different mechanisms and producing different toxins.

1. **Venomous Invertebrates**, such as jellyfish, stinging corals, sea anemones, sea pansies, hydroids, and the Portuguese Man o'War belong to a group of marine animals known as cnidarians, with more than 9,000 species worldwide. They possess stinging nematocysts used to envenomate victims. Nematocysts are triggered by contact, which leads to skin penetration with the concurrent release toxins that can cause intense pain, inflammation at the sites of exposure, and a urticarial skin rash (hives). Rarely, these envenomations lead to systemic symptoms and death.

a. *Chironex fleckeri*, known as the "sea wasp", and *C. quadrigatus*, are the most dangerous of the invertebrate coelenterates identified as box-jellyfish. Nematocyst stings from these jellyfish produce immediate discolored

wheals that progress to extensive swelling, erythema (reddening), vesiculation (blistering), and necrosis. The victim experiences immediate intense pain which can be incapacitating. Within minutes after tentacle attachment and envenomation, the affected individual may become cyanotic, convulsive, and pulseless. Pulmonary edema is evidenced upon autopsy. First aid is of utmost importance as the victim may die within minutes of being stung. All embedded nematocysts and attached tentacles must be removed immediately to prevent further envenomation, and the affected area should be washed with saltwater and a commercial vinegar or 3-10% acetic acid applied to neutralize the toxin. An antivenom for *C. fleckeri* stings is available for cases of "sea wasp" poisoning. Other treatment is supportive.

b. **Echinoderms**, including the starfish and sea urchins, possess hard exoskeletons with spines which can penetrate the human skin and release venom. These toxins cause severe pain, redness, swelling, muscle weakness, paresthesias (i.e., sensations of burning, prickling, or formication), and cardiac arrhythmias. Paralysis and respiratory depression may occur. If spines break and become embedded in the skin, they should be removed, sometimes requiring surgical intervention. Ancillary treatment is supportive.

c. **Mollusks**, including coneshells and cephalopods, may envenomate upon handling. Coneshells envenomate by a radular tooth or dart that produces localized paresthesias, numbness, and paralysis, which may progress to respiratory arrest. Cephalopods such as octopi secrete a toxic saliva which is inoculated into the victim through a bite from its beak. These bites usually produce bleeding and are painful, causing swelling, redness, inflammation, blurred vision, numbness, difficulty in swallowing, and occasional paralysis. Treatment for mollusk envenomation is primarily supportive.

Several species of polychaete marine roundworms possess biting jaws with venom glands. Bites can cause swelling, pain, and erythema (reddening), with spontaneous healing in several days. Only supportive treatment is indicated.

2. **Venomous Vertebrates** possess venom glands which can inflict serious injury to victims upon accidental exposure. More than 100 species of marine fish possess a defensive venom-injecting apparatus. Although worldwide in distribution, most venomous species are found in tropical and semi-tropical waters around coral reefs. Included are stingrays, scorpion fish, lion fish, weever fish, stonefish, zebrafish, tiger fish, turkey fish, fire cod, toadfish, stargazers, stonelifters, catfish, and surgeonfish. Venom glands are usually associated with spines or barbs in front of the dorsal, anal, or pectoral fins and spines in the tail and gill covers. In the stingray, the venom gland is located at the tip of the long barbed spine.

Envenomations are associated with immediate and extremely intense pain at the puncture site, with some bleeding from the penetrating wound. Associated symptoms include nausea, vomiting, weakness, respiratory distress, convulsions, numbness, and occasional death. Treatment of stung limbs involves immersion of the limb in hot water (110-120F) for 30-60 minutes. All embedded spines, barbs, or other foreign materials must be removed from the injured site. Antibiotics and tetanus toxoid should be administered to patients stung by stingrays or scorpionfish, where larger penetrating wounds are encountered. Antivenom is available for stonefish envenomations. Supportive therapy is generally adequate.

Sea snakes possess paddle-shaped tails and multiple fangs and are highly venomous. The bite is usually painless and results in several small puncture wounds. Generalized rhabdomyolysis (i.e., disintegration or dissolution of muscle) is the dominant feature of sea snake envenomation. Early symptoms include headache, thirst, sweating and vomiting, with generalized aching and tenderness of the muscles within 30 minutes. Trismus or lockjaw is a frequent manifestation. Subsequently, a generalized paralysis occurs with respiratory failure as the muscles become stiff and nonresponsive. Renal failure and cardiac arrest are the result of damage to skeletal muscles. An antivenom is available and should be given immediately upon development of symptoms.

- e. **Dangerous Non-Venomous Aquatic Animals** can inflict serious injuries to divers and others inhabiting the aquatic environment because of their aggressive behavior and size.

Many species of sharks are found worldwide in temperate and tropical waters that have attacked divers and swimmers inflicting severe and fatal injuries. Other potentially dangerous marine and freshwater animals include the mantarays, barracudas, moray eels, alligators and crocodiles, electric eels, piranhas, and several snakes such as the cottonmouth moccasin and brown water snake.

Some marine mammals may also be dangerous for humans, including the polar bear, sea lion, hippopotamus, and the duck-billed platypus. All wounds from these animals should be thoroughly debrided and rabies prophylactic vaccination considered.

2. Controlling and Preventing Exposure

a. General Considerations

All diving operations are conducted in biologically-contaminated water, the degree of hazard being a function of the type and number of potentially infective or venomous organisms and aquatic life present. Seawater and inland waters are essentially mixtures of numerous different microorganisms, some of which are normal inhabitants of the aquatic environment and others which originate from human and animal excreta and shedding. The majority of microorganisms found as aquatic inhabitants are harmless to humans, they are normal commensals of animals, birds, and mammals. However, certain species of viruses, bacteria, fungi, algae, and parasites are recognized as human pathogens and opportunistic microorganisms; the major sources of these disease-producing organisms being human and animal excreta, especially from infected hosts. The dumping of raw sewage into oceans, lakes, and rivers is the primary source of exposure to potentially infectious and toxigenic microorganisms for both humans and animals, including consumable species such as shellfish.

The appearance of water per se may be misleading for workers, since crystal-clear water can be grossly contaminated with microorganisms, e.g., pristine-appearing water can contain upwards of a million microorganisms per milliliter. However, as the water appearance becomes brackish and foul-smelling, the likelihood of extensive microbial contamination increases significantly, unless the pollution is due to toxic chemicals, which may also be detrimental to microbial life. Clearly, when entering water that has known or potential effluents from sewage disposal, the need to take protective measures is mandated.

The most important preventive strategy to avoid occupational disease while conducting marine operations is "exposure control." When conducting diving operations in known polluted waters, the need for optimal protection from exposure to these waters is indicated. All body parts must be protected by diving apparel and extreme care must be exercised to avoid mucous membrane and oral exposure to even minute quantities of water.

It is imperative that diving personnel with pre-existing wounds, incompletely healed surgical incisions, or underlying disease, completely refrain from entering the aquatic environment. Numerous pathogenic and opportunistic microorganisms require an easy portal of entry, such as a previous cut, abrasion, or wound, in order to infect. In addition, individuals that have underlying disease or are immunosuppressed are significantly more susceptible to the possibility of serious and life-threatening infection upon exposure. Waterborne microorganisms can cause serious respiratory disease when the normally sterile lung is contaminated through near drowning or accidental

aspiration of polluted water.

It is clearly understood that we exist in a world full of health risks, risks that affect us every day of our lives. When operating in the aquatic environment, an awareness of the potential and real risks present is necessary in order to avoid serious consequences; that is the purpose of this document. As Barsky stated in *Diving in High Risk Environments*, "when diving in contaminated water, ... precautions include obtaining the right equipment, maintaining it according to manufacturer's specifications, completing the initial training, continuing with monthly training dives to ensure competency in the use of the equipment, and maintaining a realistic attitude about what you can and can't do."

Thus, risk reduction is the key. By having an understanding of the biohazards present in the aquatic environment, we can minimize or prevent exposure to these biohazards. Through the deployment of a hierarchy of exposure control measures generally understood and accepted in the management of biohazards, namely, engineering practices, good work habits, medical surveillance and prophylactic vaccination, and the use of appropriate protective equipment and apparel, risk can be reduced. Engineering practices per se (i.e., biocontainment) are of limited use in the aquatic environment for controlling exposure to biohazards, although important for the protection of laboratory personnel handling potentially dangerous samples or specimens, e.g., the use of laminar flow cabinets. Therefore, the application of good work habits in conjunction with medical monitoring and the use of personal protective equipment will be emphasized. Each of these areas will be discussed briefly; additional information is available in *Standard Methods for the Handling and Management of Biohazardous Materials*, Jerry J. Tulis, Ph.D., Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Duke University Medical Center, February/March, 1994, produced under Cooperative Agreement U60/CCU408717-02 for the EPA's National Biohazard Risk Program.

b. **Good Work Habits**

Workers engaged in operations in the aquatic environment need to adhere to standard procedures of infection control. Exposure to potentially polluted waters must be prevented or limited in order to avoid infection. In the referenced document *Standard Methods for the Handling and Management of Biohazardous Materials*, the following section is pertinent to marine and diving operations: Section 5.2.1 Work Practices, specifically (e) the collection of land and marine animals, (f) the collection of water samples, sediments, waste, sewage, and other environmental specimens, and (g) the use of diving and other personal protective equipment.

Diving equipment must be decontaminated after every use in order to prevent exposure of the diver or attending personnel to waterborne hazards, especially toxic materials and pathogenic microorganisms. Decontamination involves the initial cleaning and decontamination of the exterior of the diving equipment, followed by similar procedures for the interior of the diving equipment. Decontamination of the exterior is conducted to remove or destroy any potentially dangerous microorganisms acquired from the aquatic environment, whereas decontamination of the interior is to remove or destroy any infectious microorganisms deposited by the diver during equipment use (e.g., from blood or other body fluids). Moreover, personal hygiene is mandatory; employees must shower immediately upon removal of diving equipment. For information on the selection of disinfectants for use on diving equipment, namely, alcohols, formaldehyde, glutaraldehyde, chlorine-liberating halogens, iodine-liberating halogens, phenolics, and quaternary ammonium compounds, see the document entitled *Standard Methods for the Handling and Management of Biohazardous Materials, Appendix III, Generic Classification of Disinfectants*.

[NOTE: THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS ON DECONTAMINATION ARE OUTDATED. PLEASE REFER INSTEAD TO APPENDIX Q: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR DIVER DECONTAMINATION.]

1. Exterior Diving Suit Decontamination

The decontamination process begins as the diver exits the water. Initially, a high-pressure water spray in a top-to-bottom pattern of washing is used to remove gross contamination. All personnel assisting with decontamination (e.g., tenders) should wear appropriate protective apparel to avoid exposure. Neutralizing agents or disinfectants are then used, depending on knowledge of the potential contaminants. For destruction of microorganisms, a surfactant such as trisodium phosphate is used followed with a spray of betadine, zepamine, or tincture of green soap. Areas that should receive an increased careful disinfection include the helmet/yoke interface, seams, zippers, and the soles of boots. After a minimal 10-minute exposure to these products, decontaminated areas are rinsed with fresh water.

2. Interior Diving Suit Decontamination

Upon completion of disinfection of the exterior of diving equipment, the suit may be removed. All pieces of diving equipment are placed in individually marked containers as removed, and the containers are sealed appropriately. Information to be included on container labels includes the date of exposure, the identity of the piece, known or suspected contaminants, the duration of exposure, and the decontamination procedure. A record is kept of the use and maintenance of each piece of the diving apparatus. The sealed containers are placed in a designated equipment decontamination area.

Interior surfaces of diving equipment require prompt decontamination to avoid or limit the development of mold growth, i.e., mildew formation, especially if moist from perspiration. Drying the suit while turned inside out, and the use of appropriate germicidal sprays are recommended. Inspection of the surfaces for detection of dried blood from lacerations or cuts is an important cleaning and decontamination procedure to avoid disease transmission. The selection of a high-level disinfectant depends on the types of surfaces to be treated, i.e., plastic, glass, metal, or cloth. High level disinfectants include various formulations of the generic disinfectants glutaraldehyde, sodium hypochlorite, formaldehyde, and phenol. Care must be exercised in order that potentially toxic disinfectant residues are not left on diving apparatus; some pieces may need to be rinsed with fresh water and dried before reuse or storage.

3. Personal Hygiene

Immediately following the removal of diving equipment, the diver should shower vigorously for a minimum of 5 minutes, using a disinfectant soap. All undergarments, including bathing suits, underwear, etc., should be placed in a plastic container. Upon completion of the initial showering, the worker should towel-dry, depositing the used towel in a plastic bag. A second showering should then follow, again for 5 minutes, and with the same toweling procedure. A medical evaluation is recommended when symptoms of disease or injury are evident.

4. Specimen Collection

Workers engaged in the collection of marine specimens and environmental samples, including potentially polluted water and aquatic sediments, must be cognizant of the presence of pathogenic microorganisms and dangerous marine life. Care must be exercised when handling water samples contaminated with sewage, since numerous enteric microorganisms are present, some of which can cause disease upon exposure of abraded skin

or mucous membranes. Touching of the oral cavity, nasal passages, or eyes with contaminated hands, whether gloved or ungloved, can result in localized or systemic infections of these areas, i.e., gastrointestinal infections, sinusitis, or conjunctivitis. Injuries from marine animals, including penetrations from barbs, spines, and fins, can become infected when exposed to contaminated water or aquatic sediments. Numerous venomous marine animals can inflict painful stings or bites resulting in envenomation; heavy duty gloves must be worn when handling these marine animals.

Important exposure control measures that need to be considered when collecting aquatic materials include the complete avoidance of water potentially contaminated with pathogenic microorganisms. Should exposure to these waters be required, the use of protective apparel that covers all exposed body parts is required. All previously used protective apparel must be discarded in appropriate biohazard containers if disposable, or properly decontaminated if to be reused. Since most collection will be conducted with the use of the hands, protective gloves and vigorous handwashing are important principles of infection control; these precautions extend to the laboratory where collected specimens are handled, processed, and discarded.

3. MEDICAL MONITORING PROGRAM

a. Physiologic Hazards Associated with Diving Operations

Physiologic injuries associated with diving are usually based on two physical laws, Boyle's Law and Henry's Law. According to Boyle's Law, the volume of a given mass of gas is proportional to the absolute pressure found in that environment. As the pressure increases during diving operations, the volume of gas decreases, and the deeper the dive, the smaller the gas volume. As the diver ascends, the gas volume expands and barotrauma may result, especially during rapid ascent.

According to Henry's Law, the amount of gas in a volume of solvent is proportional to the partial pressure of the gas, and while descending during diving operations, the gases become increasingly soluble in blood and tissue. This condition leads to decompression sickness and nitrogen narcosis, and depending on clinical signs and symptoms, may require recompression therapy.

Other potential physiologic hazards that may affect divers are heat and cold stress. Heat stress is a problem associated with total encapsulation in a diving suit. As the diver engages in activity, cooling which normally occurs through sweating may be insufficient and hyperthermia may develop. Simply monitoring the breathing and heart rates are good indicators that hyperthermia is occurring. Symptoms of heat stress include weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, and impaired judgement. Muscle cramps, delirium, seizures, and eventually coma may develop if body temperature continues to increase. Appropriate measures such as cessation of work should be undertaken if hyperthermia is suspected. Maintaining the diver in a cool environment during pre-dive and post-dive procedures may be useful.

Cold stress may occur, especially when working in frigid environments. Body heat may be lost by conduction, convection, and radiation. Cold injuries may develop from both freezing or non-freezing of tissues. Injuries of the extremities are most likely to involve the cheeks, nose, external ears, fingers, toes, hands, and feet. Risk factors for cold injury include old age, fatigue, alcohol consumption, smoking, underlying conditions affecting the peripheral circulation, and inadequate insulating clothing. Early symptoms of hypothermia include uncontrolled shivering, confusion, stumbling, disorientation, and skin cold to the touch.

Divers should be closely monitored for symptoms of either hyperthermia or hypothermia. Appropriate equipment for cooling or warming the diver should be available. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) developed the suit-under-suit (SUS) diving system to provide improved protection for divers. The SUS is a positive pressure dive suit that provides thermoregulation and minimizes leakage. It is comprised of two suits, an inner thin-rubber suit with attached boots, and an outer heavyweight rubber suit with exhaust valves on both ankles and one arm. The two suits are mated at the neck dam. An umbilical hose is used to pump clean thermally-regulated water into the cavity between the two suits to warm or cool the diver. The cavity is maintained at a positive pressure, thereby preventing contaminated water from entering the cavity in the event of a puncture or leak in the outer suit.

b. Hazards Associated with Diving Equipment

With certain types of diving equipment, the possibility exists for the contamination of the breathing air supply leading to asphyxial conditions. Improperly functioning surface equipment may introduce noxious and life-threatening fumes to the diver's air supply.

Allergic reactions can develop among workers exposed to diving equipment materials, especially from the mouthpiece, suit, and face mask. Diving equipment is comprised of numerous different chemicals, some of which can cause allergic responses among sensitized divers. Cases of latex allergy have been reported among divers. These reactions are manifested by the appearance of skin irritation, including rashes, vesicle formation, and weeping lesions. A diagnosis of allergic contact dermatitis can usually be made with a case history, physical examination, and patch testing. An investigation to determine the specific cause of contact dermatitis is important, since other materials may be substituted in order to allow continued diving. Treatment includes the use of cold Burow's solution dressings and corticosteroids.

The chaffing of certain body parts, e.g., the toes, knees, wrists, and axillae, can occur from the seams and collar of diving suits. The wearing of a full-body leotard under the diving suit may prevent chaffing.

Residues remaining on diving equipment from the process of decontamination, i.e., disinfection, may cause allergic responses or skin irritation to occur. The thorough rinsing of equipment after disinfection should prevent these problems from occurring.

c. Selection of Personnel for Diving Operations

Not all workers are psychologically or physiologically prepared to handle the numerous challenges that may be encountered during diving. It is not uncommon for divers to experience claustrophobia in totally encapsulated suits while in an aquatic environment, especially when entering confined spaces. Physical challenges such as the weight of the equipment, limited movement, and buildup of body heat, can result in diver discomfort and distress. Diving in highly polluted and dangerous waters can cause undue stress on diving personnel. Thus, the screening of personnel for diving operations per se, and especially in high risk environments, is mandatory; workers need to be aware of potential hazards and trained to respond properly during difficult and emergency situations.

d. Medical Surveillance

Diving operations are associated with numerous potentially dangerous and sometimes life-threatening situations for both the inexperienced and the experienced diver. Because certain identifying medical conditions may place

an employee at increased risk of injury, harm, or disease, it is recommended that a thorough medical evaluation and periodic physical examinations are performed. Included are a complete history of illnesses and general health and a comprehensive medical examination. Additional tests may include pulmonary function tests, EKG, EEG, and audiogram. Useful examples of medical history and physical examination forms used by the Recreational Scuba Training Council and Duke University are presented as Appendix V, with contraindications for diving listed and discussed. Additional testing will vary according to the frequency of diving operations, the depth of the dives, any underlying medical disorders, the presence of known contaminants in diving waters, etc.

In general, when divers have open lesions or other wounds, they should not dive. However, simple skin lesions can be covered with a petroleum-based antibiotic ointment and covered; the wound is thoroughly cleansed after the dive, with removal of all dressings and medications. Upper respiratory infections tend to swell the passages of the eustachian tube and the sinuses; diving under these conditions can cause barotrauma of the sinuses or the middle ear. Pre-existing lower respiratory infections can lead to pulmonary barotrauma and serious injury due to mucous plugging of the small airways, thereby preventing the escape of air during ascent. All individuals experiencing systemic illness should refrain from diving until fully recovered.

e. Prophylactic Vaccination

As an important adjunct to the use of personal protective equipment, good work habits, and diver training, the use of specific vaccines will help prevent certain infections associated with the aquatic environment. Although numerous disease-causing agents are found in polluted waters, primarily from sewage effluents, the number of vaccines available to protect the worker is limited. Nevertheless, serious diseases can be prevented with the use of these vaccines, and divers should avail themselves of their protective value. Among the vaccines that are recommended for all personnel engaged in diving and other marine operations are those developed against the viral infections that cause hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and poliomyelitis, and against bacterial infections that cause typhoid fever, cholera, and tetanus. In addition, when workers are engaged in marine operations in semi-tropical and tropical waters, especially where insect vectors of various viral, rickettsial, bacterial, and parasitic diseases are present, the need for additional vaccines, prophylactic medications, and insect repellents needs to be considered. Additional information on vaccinations is provided in the document entitled Foreign Travel and Field Operations Immunologic Readiness Program, Jerry J. Tulis, Ph.D. and Ricky L. Langley, M.D., M.P.H., Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Duke University Medical Center, June, 1993, produced under Cooperative Agreement U60 /CCU 40871 7-01 for the EPA's National Biohazard Risk Management Program.

f. Post-Exposure Evaluation

When an employee experiences an accident or potential exposure to hazardous materials, including polluted waters containing pathogenic microorganisms, the worker needs to be promptly evaluated by medical personnel. It may be necessary to evacuate the employee to a facility where hyperbaric oxygen therapy can be administered. When an exposure to infectious agents is suspected, the exposed areas need to be thoroughly cleansed and the worker monitored for the onset of clinical symptoms.

Exposure to nematocysts from jellyfish and other marine animals can be treated with salt water and weak acetic acid (i.e., vinegar) after removal of the embedded nematocysts. Injuries from stingrays and venomous fish should be treated initially to hot water to neutralize the toxin; antivenom and other life support measures may be required. It is mandatory that medical personnel evaluate injuries from envenomations as promptly as possible.

The exposure of diving personnel to the residual blood or body fluids of other divers, i.e., in the use of shared diving equipment, needs to be addressed by application of the bloodborne pathogens standard. For additional information see the document entitled Model Standard Operating Procedure for Compliance with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, Jerry J. Tulis, Ph.D., Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Duke University Medical Center, May, 1993, produced under Cooperative Agreement U60/CCU408717-01 for the EPA's National Biohazard Risk Management Program. For all occupational exposures, employees involved in diving and other marine operations need to be monitored periodically until the injury has healed or recovery from infection or illness is complete. Diving personnel may need to be restricted from diving operations until the medical provider deems it safe for the employee to resume diving.

g. Medical Recordkeeping

1. General Considerations

The proper maintenance of medical records is vital to a medical surveillance program. Certain federal agencies, e.g., OSHA, mandate requirements for the maintenance of medical records. Under OSHA regulations, the following definitions apply:

- employee exposure records mean any information on workplace measurements or monitoring data, biological monitoring data, and material safety data sheets.
- medical record means a record concerning the health status of an employee which is monitored by a health care professional; the results of medical examinations and laboratory tests; medical opinions, diagnoses, and recommendations; first aid records, with descriptions of treatment and prescriptions; and, employee medical complaints.

OSHA regulations specify that employees or their designated representative must be given access to exposure and medical records. However, OSHA does not mandate the form, manner, or process by which an employer maintains a record provided the information contained in the record is preserved and retrievable. Chest roentgenograms must be preserved in their original state.

2. Medical Records

The medical record for each employee shall be preserved and maintained for at least the duration of employment plus thirty (30) years, except that the following types of records need not be retained for any specific period:

- a. Health insurance claims records maintained separately from the employer's medical program and its records.
- b. First aid records (not including medical histories) of one-time treatment and subsequent observation of minor scratches, cuts, burns, splinters, etc. which do not involve medical treatment, loss of consciousness, restriction of motion or work, or transfer to another job, if made on-site by a non-physician and if maintained separately from the employer's medical program and its records.
- c. The medical records of employees who have worked for less than one year for the employer need not be retained beyond the term of employment if they are provided to the employee upon termination of employment.

3. Employee Exposure Records

Each employee exposure record shall be preserved and maintained for at least thirty (30) years, except for the following:

- a. Background data or environmental (workplace) monitoring or measuring, such as laboratory reports and worksheets, need only be retained for one year provided the sampling results, the collection methodology (sampling plan), a description of the analytical and mathematical methods used, and a summary of other background data relevant to interpretation of the results obtained are retained for at least thirty (30) years.
- b. Material safety data sheets records concerning the identity of a substance or agent need not be retained for any specified period provided some record of the identity (i.e., chemical name) of the substance or agent, where it was used and when it was used is retained for at least thirty (30) years.
- c. Biological monitoring results designated as exposure records by specific occupational safety and health standards shall be preserved and maintained as required by the specific standard.

4. Analyses Using Exposure of Medical Records

Each analysis using exposure of medical records shall be preserved and maintained for at least thirty (30) years.

5. OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard

The recent OSHA standard on protection of workers against bloodborne pathogens specifies requirements on recordkeeping. Medical records and training record requirements are specified as follows:

a. **Medical Records**

The employer shall establish and maintain an accurate record for each employee with an occupational exposure; this record shall include the following information:

1. The name and social security number of the employee.
2. A copy of the employee's hepatitis B vaccination status including all the dates of vaccination and any medical records relative to the employee's ability to receive immunization.
3. A copy of all results of examinations, medical testing, and follow-up procedures.
4. The employer's copy of the healthcare professional's written opinion.
5. A copy of the information provided to the healthcare professional.
6. The employer shall ensure that employee medical records are kept confidential and are not disclosed or reported without the employee's express written consent to any person within or outside the workplace except as required by this section or as may be required by law.
7. The employer shall maintain the records for at least the duration of employment plus thirty (30) years.

b. **Training Records**

Training records shall include the following information:

1. The date(s) of the training.
2. The contents or summary of the training session.
3. The names and qualifications of the persons conducting the training.
4. The names and job titles of all persons attending the training sessions.
5. Training records shall be maintained for three (3) years from the date on which the training occurred.

4. Employee Training Program

a. **General Considerations**

All employees whose job requirements involve potential exposure to waterborne pathogenic microorganisms, aquatic life responsible for dermatoses and envenomations, and dangerous marine and freshwater animals need to receive specialized safety training. Included are all employees whose occupational duties involve diving operations in both seawater and freshwater; the monitoring of estuarine and coastal waters; the collection of water samples, sediments, sludges, and sewage; the collection of marine and fresh water animal and plant species; and the laboratory use and disposal of collected environmental samples and specimens. The training should be provided during orientation after hiring and annually thereafter, with more frequent specialized training as deemed necessary for compliance with newly issued policies, directives, guidelines, or regulations.

b. **Biological Safety Training**

Included in the biological safety training sessions should be the following de minimus information:

- etiology of waterborne infectious diseases
- geographic distribution of infectious agents and dangerous marine life
- sources of water pollution
- infectivity of microorganisms from aquatic environments
- transmissibility of aquatic microorganisms
- clinical symptoms of relevant diseases
- symptomatic and specific treatment
- vaccine prophylaxis
- exposure incident reporting
- biocontainment practices for laboratory work
- good work practices
- use of protective clothing
- shipment of biologic specimens
- handling of biomedical wastes
- medical surveillance programs
- compliance with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard
- compliance with consensus guidelines and policies
- other relevant issues

Additional specialized training to be provided to employees whose duties involve diving operations includes the following de minimus information:

- diving in contaminated and polluted water
- selection of safe diving equipment
- decontamination of diving equipment
- personal hygiene after diving
- physical preparedness for diving
- contraindications to diving

The document entitled Standard Methods for the Handling and Management of Biohazardous Materials, Section

6.4, Biosafety Training provides additional information on safety awareness training when coping with occupational biohazards.

Finally, it is not within the scope of this document to provide information on the training requirements of divers from the viewpoint of equipment selection, use, maintenance, and storage; discussion of scuba and surface-supplied diving equipment; diving plans and techniques; equipment check lists; and other important considerations. This document is limited to the biohazards associated with diving and other marine and fresh water operations.

APPENDIX M

Dive Computer Guidelines

DIVE COMPUTER GUIDELINES

1. Makes and models of dive computers specifically disapproved by the Diving Safety Board (DSB) shall *not* be used.
2. Any diver wishing to use a dive computer as a means of determining decompression status must first obtain approval from his/her Unit Diving Officer (UDO). The UDO or designee will ensure the diver is familiar with use of that particular computer before the diver uses it to control a dive.
3. Each diver using a dive computer to plan and/or control dives must have his/her own unit.
4. On any given dive, both divers in a buddy pair must follow the more conservative dive computer.
5. If a dive computer fails at any time during a dive, the dive must be terminated and the appropriate surfacing procedures initiated immediately, unless a working backup computer that can serve as the primary is being carried by the diver.
6. After conducting a dive utilizing solely the latest DSB-approved U.S. Navy (USN) tables, a diver should either wait until his/her residual nitrogen time (RNT) is zero (table-based) before conducting additional dives using a dive computer to control bottom time, or conduct all remaining dives utilizing the USN tables.
7. Backup computers should be the same make and model as the primary, or at a minimum, operate with a more conservative algorithm resulting in a residual nitrogen value that is equal to, or higher, than that displayed by the primary. If this cannot be determined, or if switching to a computer that was not a backup on all previous dives, then switching should not take place until the computer(s) have cleared, indicating no residual nitrogen. If a primary computer has ceased operation without a backup, the Divemaster should determine if recreating the dive series with tables is necessary. Any additional dives would require using the latest DSB-approved USN tables.
8. Once the dive computer is in use, it must not be switched off until it indicates that complete out gassing has occurred, or 18 hours have elapsed, whichever comes first.
9. When using a dive computer, non-emergency ascents are to be at a rate specified by the computer being used, but should not exceed one foot every two seconds.
10. As an added safety precaution, divers using a dive computer should make a stop between 10 and 30 feet for at least 3 minutes and a stop at one half of the maximum diving depth for one minute, especially for dives below 60 fsw.
11. Multiple deep dives require careful planning regardless of whether dive tables or computers are used.
12. Divers using air integrated computers must be properly equipped and prepared should an air computer component, high pressure hose, or other integrated component fail.
13. Digital air integrated displays may not be appropriate for divers with limited near vision, or for limited visibility conditions.

14. Special Instructions for **Nitrox Dive Computer** Use:

- Dive computers may be used to compute decompression status during Nitrox dives. Manufacturers' guidelines and operations instructions should be followed.
- Prior to diving with a Nitrox dive computer, users should demonstrate to the UDO or designee a clear understanding of the display, operations, and manipulation of the unit being used.
- If Nitrox is used to increase the safety margin of an air-based dive computer, the maximum operating depth (MOD), oxygen exposure and time limits for the Nitrox gas being dived should not be exceeded.
- Dive computers capable of pO₂ limit and fO₂ adjustment should be checked by the diver within 60 minutes prior to the start each dive to ensure compatibility with the gas being used.

Appendix N

Memorandum of Agreement on EPA's Diving Safety Program

**EPA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION
AND
DIVING SAFETY BOARD**

Background

In 1982, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) exempted scientific diving from commercial diving regulations (29 CFR 1910, Subpart T) when (1) the diving operation met OSHA's definition of scientific diving; (2) the diving operation is part of a diving program that uses a safety manual; and (3) the diving program is directed and controlled by a diving control board that conforms to certain criteria (29 CFR 1910.401[a][2][iv]). OSHA's final scientific diving guidelines for the exemption became effective in 1985.

Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is to establish a formal agreement between EPA's Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division (SHEMD) and Diving Safety Board (DSB) on the Agency's Diving Safety Program. This MOA affirms SHEMD's authority for oversight of EPA's Dive Safety Program, including administrative, compliance, and training requirements. It also affirms the DSB's authority for overall programmatic and operational management of EPA's Diving Safety Program. Furthermore, the DSB retains the autonomy specified in OSHA's scientific diving exemption (29 CFR 1910.401), which ensures that administrative or operational demands do not unduly influence or require field personnel to perform dive operations with unreasonable risk.

Primary Roles and Responsibilities of SHEMD

Roles

The Director of SHEMD appoints a SHEMD Representative to serve on EPA's DSB. The primary roles of the SHEMD Representative is to:

1. Attend DSB meetings as an ex officio member.
2. Serve as a liaison on the DSB.
3. Provide safety and health assistance, guidance and support to the DSB.
4. Lead and conduct independent audits of EPA's dive units in accordance with EPA's *Diving Safety Manual*.

The SHEMD Representative will also ensure that a valid MOA is in effect to provide autonomy to the DSB as required by OSHA under the scientific diving exemption (29 CFR Part 1910.401).

Responsibilities

The SHEMD Representative is responsible for:

1. Attending annual DSB meetings
2. Maintaining headquarters reports of the Diving Safety Program, including:
 - (a) DSB annual reports
 - (b) Audit reports
3. Recommending changes in policy to the DSB

Primary Roles and Responsibilities of the DSB

The DSB is composed of the Unit Diving Officers (UDOs) as voting members, representing one vote from each diving unit and the SHEMD Representative as an ex officio member. Non-voting consultants, where necessary, may be invited to provide essential expertise on matters relating to the Diving Safety Program.

Roles

The DSB has autonomous and absolute authority over EPA's Diving Safety Program's scientific operations. All recommendations for revisions of the policy, diving rules, or other requirements associated with this program must be agreed upon by consensus of the voting members of the DSB. As determined by the DSB Chairman, all voting members of the DSB will be polled if the business at hand can be delayed, and the absent vote(s) would determine the decision.

Responsibilities

The DSB is responsible for:

1. Recommending policy and changes in operating procedures within EPA to ensure a safe and efficient Diving Safety Program
2. Reviewing existing policies, procedures, and training needs to ensure a continually high level of technical skills and knowledge throughout the Diving Safety Program
3. Planning, programming, and directing policy pertaining to the initial certification of new divers and refresher training of experienced divers in cooperation with the Diving Safety Program's Technical and Training Directors
4. Approving changes in operating policy
5. Serving as an appeal board in cases where a diver's certification has been suspended
6. Planning, programming, and directing diver workshops, seminars, and other activities considered essential to maintaining a high level of competency and safety among divers
7. Reviewing EPA diving accidents or potentially dangerous incidents and reporting on preventive measures to ensure safe diving

8. Reviewing all budgeted advanced diving projects, or directing the DSB Chairman to establish and chair an approved review committee for such projects
9. Directly advising SHEMD on any policies, procedures, or actions that affect the safety or efficiency of EPA diving activities
10. As necessary, reviewing EPA contracts and cooperative agreements that involve diving.
11. Reviewing diving reciprocity agreements and, when necessary, dive plans for non-EPA divers when funded and supervised by EPA.
12. Securing sufficient funds to administer, support, and comply with the safety and health requirements associated with EPA divers.

Duration of Agreement

This agreement will commence on the date of the signature of all parties and will continue in effect until amended through agreement by the parties.



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Wesley J. Carpenter, Acting Director
Safety, Health and Environmental Management Division

4/21/10

(Date)



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Kennard Potts, Chairman
Diving Safety Board

4/22/10

(Date)

APPENDIX O

Surface Supplied Diving SOP

**US EPA
SURFACE SUPPLIED DIVING SOP**

Credits: USEPA Environmental Response Team developed this SOP, which has been adapted for Region 10 usage.

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ATTACHMENT 1 – SURFACE-SUPPLIED AIR CHECKLIST

1.0 OBJECTIVE

This standard operating procedure (SOP) states the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) policy concerning surface supplied diving operations. Procedures for general dive operations are specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. This SOP is not intended to be a substitute for actual hands-on training.

2.0 APPLICABILITY

Surface supplied diving applies to diving operations during which divers are supplied with breathing gas through an umbilical hose from the surface. These procedures apply to EPA employees and contractors working directly for EPA, that are engaged in surface supplied diving operations. This SOP presumes and requires prior training and experience with surface supplied diving.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

3.1 Certification and Physical Examinations

All divers must be dive certified and medically qualified to perform their diving duties, as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.2 General Dive Equipment and Safety Equipment

Each component of a diver's equipment shall be maintained in a safe operating condition, and shall be inspected, tested, serviced and logged as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. All appropriate safety equipment shall be available at the dive site as specified in the Dive Safety Plan and USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.3 Documentation

Project-specific Dive Plans and Dive Safety Plans shall be issued prior to performing dive operations, and all dives shall be logged as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. The Unit Dive Officer (UDO) shall maintain logs of each diver's certifications, medical clearance to dive, and all health and safety training (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR], first aid and oxygen administration) as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.4 Surface Supplied Diving Equipment

3.4.1 Breathing Gas

The breathing gas may be air or enriched air (e.g., nitrox up to 40% oxygen) depending on the planned dive profile, if the control box and umbilicals are approved by the manufacturer for that usage and/or have been oxygen cleaned. Gas may be supplied by means of pressurized tanks, low pressure/high volume compressors or a compressor/tank system. All breathing gases must be either generated on-site with a compressor, or purchased through a reputable dive shop or commercial gas supplier. Dive shops and commercial suppliers are required to have their breathing gas analyzed for impurities regularly. Compressor-generated breathing gas is also required to be analyzed to CGA grade E standards at least once every six months. Dive

operations shall not be initiated unless there is a sufficient supply of breathing gas for all divers, including stand-by divers and emergency reserve.

3.4.1.1 Compressed Gas Cylinders

All self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) tanks or other pressurized vessels used for breathing gases must be properly maintained, and undergo hydrostatic testing at a qualified facility at least every five years, and have an internal visual inspection by a qualified technician annually. The divemaster or designee shall check that each tank intended for dive operations has markings for current inspection and test dates. Prior to use, the yokes on all gas cylinders should be inspected for damage to the seat or O-rings. Gas pressure must not exceed the rated working pressure for any of the components of the entire diving gas supply system.

3.4.1.2 Compressors

All breathing gas compressors must be properly maintained, with regularly logged maintenance records. Compressors must be capable of supplying breathing gas at a satisfactory volume (at least double the volume required) and pressure (at least 25% greater than the maximum pressure requirement anticipated) for the number of divers potentially supplied at the deepest depth potentially encountered at a work site.

3.4.2 Surface Supplied Control Box

Surface supplied control boxes are capable of running two divers simultaneously on separate umbilicals, and can accept breathing gas either from compressed gas cylinders (working pressure can range from 3,000 pounds per square inch [psi] to 3,500 psi; check the manufacturer specifications for details) or from a low pressure/high volume compressor. Air is the only breathing gas approved by some manufacturers for use with their control boxes without special cleaning, while other manufacturers allow the use of Nitrox mixes up to 40%. One should check the specifications of their control box before using Nitrox.

These boxes typically have an internal rechargeable 12-volt gel cell battery that must be charged prior to dive operations, and indicator lights that indicate the battery charge level. The box requires very little power, and a fully charged battery should last for up to 20 hours of continuous service. If the unit does not show full charge (all indicator lights lit) after an overnight charge, the battery may need to be replaced.

While using the control box plugged into an electrical source is possible, some manufacturers cautions the user to never connect the charger during a dive due to the potential of electrical shock to the diver.

The surface supplied control box must be operated by a qualified technician. When there are one or more divers in the water on surface supplied air, the box operator can have no duties other than monitoring the breathing gas supply to the diver, maintaining communications with the diver, and logging the diver's bottom time and depth.

3.4.3 Diving Umbilicals

Surface supply umbilicals provide breathing gas, communications, the diver's depth and a strength member between the tender and the diver. Diving umbilicals may either be the sinking or floating type. The sinking type is negatively buoyant and more likely to snag on bottom obstructions or disturb contaminated sediments. The floating type is positively buoyant and more likely to be affected by surface current or vessel traffic. The buoyancy of the umbilical can be modified in the field by adding floats or weights as required.

Decontamination compatible floating umbilicals, ranging in length from 150 to 300 feet are typically used. The umbilicals are typically comprised of three separate spiral-wound hoses, although straight (not spiral wound) hoses may be utilized as well in order to use components separately if needed. This smooth polyurethane umbilical and twists, rather than tape, is ideal for operations in potentially contaminated water because it can be effectively decontaminated.

The primary hose is the diver's breathing gas supply hose, which runs between the surface supply control box and the diver's emergency manifold block (see Section 3.4.4).

The breathing gas supply hose should be rated to a working pressure of at least 300 psi. The hose is typically 3/8 inch inside diameter, but some lightweight systems may utilize a 1/4 inch diameter breathing gas hose. To ensure a sufficient air supply, users should be aware that the diameter of the breathing gas supply hose may restrict the safe operation of the system at greater depths, umbilical lengths, or breathing rates. The manufacturer should be consulted to identify any possible limitations of the breathing gas system ([Dive Lab Surface Supply Breathing Requirements and Recommendations for Kirby Morgan Helmets and Band Masks, 2008](#)).

The second component of the umbilical is the diver's hard-wired communication line (com line), which allows open, two-way communication between the diver and surface support personnel. The com line runs between the surface supply box and the diver's mask-integrated communication system (microphone and earphones). The com line is usually also equipped with a strength member capable of towing or lifting many times the diver's weight. The hard-wired umbilical may be eliminated if using a reliable wireless comm. system, although a strength member is still required.

The third component of the umbilical is the pneumofathometer (pneumo) hose, a gas line that is open on the diver's end. The 1/4 inch inner diameter pneumo runs from the surface supply control box down to the diver, with its open end attached in the area of the diver's chest. The pneumo line is a simple capillary tube type of depth gauge, which allows surface personnel to monitor the diver's depth. The control box operator can open the pneumo valve to blow gas through the pneumo hose, and when the valve is closed, the water pressure will back up the hose allowing the pneumo gauge to read depth. In some instances, the diver can also use the pneumo as a tool to inflate a lift bag or to blow sediment out of a small work area. In the event of an emergency, some manufacturers suggest the diver can also use the pneumo as an alternative breathing gas supply. The pneumo hose may be eliminated in situations where the diver monitors and controls his/her own depth and dive profile with a depth gauge or dive computer.

For polluted water diving, configuration of the umbilical on the vessel should allow for easy decontamination of the hose in the "hot zone." Moving the umbilical into the contamination reduction zone should be avoided.

3.4.4 Gas Supply Manifold Block

The diver's harness-mounted manifold block typically has two ports for attachment of incoming gas supply, one port for the dry suit inflator hose, one port for attachment of the breathing regulator, and two low pressure ports for auxiliary equipment. The primary incoming port is for attachment of the umbilical breathing gas line. This port must have a functioning non-return valve to ensure that a loss of umbilical line pressure, combined with depth pressure, won't suck the gas out of the diver's lungs or out of the emergency gas supply tank. This ensures that in the event of umbilical air supply loss, the diver will receive air from the emergency gas supply (EGS). Prior to attaching the umbilical hose to the manifold block, the non-return valve should be tested by blowing into the valve (air should flow freely through the valve), and then sucking on the valve (no air should come back through the valve).

The second incoming port on the manifold block is for attachment of the emergency gas supply ("bail-out" bottle).

In the event of a loss of air from the surface, the manifold block has a knob that the diver turns to open the EGS. At the start of the dive, the knob must be in the closed position (fully turned clockwise). During the dive the diver should periodically confirm the knob is fully closed and the submerged pressure gauge (SPG) for the EGS is full. It should be noted that as little as a quarter turn may begin depleting the EGS. All divers must be aware of the operation and placement of the manifold block, so they can find it in an emergency. No other equipment may block the diver's access to the knob.

3.4.5 Emergency Gas Supply

While dive planning must involve provision of sufficient air for the dive operation including ascent and exigencies, independent emergency breathing gas (EGS) must also be provided for all surface supplied diving operations. The bail-out bottle should be a SCUBA tank ranging in size from a 6 cubic foot (cf) pony bottle to a 80 cf SCUBA tank. The size of the bail-out bottle is determined based upon the type of water, i.e. contaminated vs. non-contaminated, working depth, type of equipment, i.e. FFM vs. helmet and the air consumption rate of the individual diver. The bail-out bottle is typically mounted with the valve down which allows the diver to turn the tank valve on, should the knob be inadvertently closed. The larger the bail-out bottle, the longer the diver has to surface in the event of a loss of surface supplied gas. The deeper the diver is working and the more potential hazards present, the larger the bail-out bottle required. A SPG for the EGS must be accessible to the diver at all times. The first-stage regulator on the pony bottle must have an over-pressure relief valve.

Sometimes it is necessary to fill the bail-out bottle in the field. In those instances, a filling whip (a length of high pressure air hose with tank yoke fittings on both ends) is used to connect the bail-out bottle to a full SCUBA tank. The empty bail-out bottle valve should be completely opened, and then the full SCUBA tank valve should be opened very slowly so that the bail-out bottle does not heat up. Depending on the size of the bail-out bottle, it may be necessary to use several SCUBA tanks to get a satisfactory fill (greater than 2500 psi).

3.4.6 Breathing Regulator

EPA divers typically wear a full face mask (FFM) when using surface supplied gas, but diving

helmets may also be used. Both the FFM and the helmet are equipped with communication equipment (microphones and earphones).

The decision to use either a helmet or full face mask depends on the resources and training available to each dive team, the dive objective, pollution/contamination level, or other environmental factors.

3.4.7 Diver Harness

A harness should be worn by the diver for all surface supplied dive operations. The harness is used as an attachment point for both the umbilical line and the diver's emergency breathing gas supply. The com line must be clipped to the diver's harness prior to the start of the dive. This safety feature allows the diver to pull the umbilical along or for the diver to be towed back to the point of entry without straining any vital gas or communication links.

3.5 Surface Supplied Diving Operations

3.5.1 Surface Supplied Control Box Operations

The control box should be secured in an area where its presence, and that of the operator, will not impede operations of the surface support crew. The box should be held open and secured to a fixed object (e.g., boat rail or a dock piling). The breathing gas source should be within easy reach of the operator. In inclement weather, the box should be set up in an area out of the rain (e.g., in the boat cabin or under a tarp).

When the surface supply control box is set up, the main power switch should be turned on and the battery power checked. The gas outlets should be uncapped and the breathing gas line and the pneumo line should be attached. Since the two lines are different diameters, they can only be attached to their respective outlets. The control box has gas outlets for two sets of umbilical lines, one set is marked in red and the other is marked in white. The control box operator must be sure to attach both lines from one umbilical to either red or white. Each umbilical line (breathing gas and pneumo) has a bronze Joint Industrial Conference (JIC) hose fitting which screws onto its gas outlet. These fittings should be lightly tightened with a wrench to prevent gas leaks, but not tight enough to put torque on the fittings. Both of the diver gas supplies (e.g. red and white sides) have a gate lever that can be opened or closed to allow gas flow to the outlets.

SCUBA tanks can be used as a source of breathing gas for surface supplied diving. The control box has a selector valve handle that is used to switch between two incoming gas lines. While the incoming lines are typically each attached to a single SCUBA tank, the team may opt to use a manifold block to attach several tanks to each incoming line. The tanks on both incoming lines must be open. After the gas tanks are attached to the system, the operator should blow out the breathing gas line by briefly opening the outlet gate to allow gas to blow out any dust or particles. The end of breathing gas line can then be attached to the diver's gas supply manifold block.

3.5.2 Communications

3.5.2.1 Vox Communications

The control box communications system can be operated either with a microphone and the built-in speaker so all surface personnel can hear the diver or the box operator can wear headphones to block out external noise (e.g., machinery, wind, extraneous conversation). When using headphones, the operator may turn off the speaker switch so that only the box operator can hear the diver. When in this mode, the operator must relay information to dive tender and other surface personnel. The set up should be close enough to the dive operation and tenders to allow clear communication between the vox communications operator and dive tender.

Prior to donning the helmet or FFM, the diver and control box operator must perform a communications check. The surface end of the com line is wired with connectors for attachment to the control box, and the diver end of the com line is wired to attach to the diver's communication line (microphone and earphones). The control box has adjustment knobs for surface-to-diver and for diver-to-surface volume. Proper two-way communications should be established prior to initiating dive operations.

3.5.2.1 "Line-pull" Communications

In the event of loss of voice communications, the dive unit should practice backup line signals to ensure the dive can be safely and efficiently aborted. Example standard line-pull signals are included below from the US Navy Dive Manual, revision 6, Table 8-3.

Example Emergency Line-pull Signals

Primary Diver to Tender:

2-2-2 *I am in a difficulty but I am OK, I need assistance, send the backup diver.*

.

3-3-3 *I am entangled and OK, I am stopping to handle it myself but ready the backup diver*

4-4-4... *I am not OK, I need immediate assistance.*

Primary Diver to Standby Diver:

Big Circular Motion: *I am entangled here (indicate where the entanglement is by putting the backup diver hands on it).*

Tap Standby's Hand on Primary Divers Chest *I am injured here (indicate the injury location).*

Tap Standbys Divers Hand to Primary Divers Second Stage *I am running low on air.*

Standby Diver to Primary Diver:

Place primary's hand back on his carabineer and give three squeezes. *I am leaving now but will be back. The standby diver goes back to return with additional air to allow more time to deal with the problem.*

USN Revision 6 Full Set of Line Pull Signals:

Table 8-3. Line-Pull Signals.

From Tender to Diver		Searching Signals (Without Circling Line)	
1 Pull	"Are you all right?" When diver is descending, one pull means "Stop."	7 Pulls	"Go on (or off) searching signals."
2 Pulls	"Going Down." During ascent, two pulls mean "You have come up too far; go back down until we stop you."	1 Pull	"Stop and search where you are."
3 Pulls	"Stand by to come up."	2 Pulls	"Move directly away from the tender if given slack; move toward the tender if strain is taken on the life line."
4 Pulls	"Come up."	3 Pulls	"Face your umbilical, take a strain, move right."
2-1 Pulls	"I understand" or "Talk to me."	4 Pulls	"Face your umbilical, take a strain, move left."
3-2 Pulls	"Ventilate."		
4-3 Pulls	"Circulate."		
From Diver to Tender		Searching Signals (With Circling Line)	
1 Pull	"I am all right." When descending, one pull means "Stop" or "I am on the bottom."	7 Pulls	"Go on (or off) searching signals."
2 Pulls	"Lower" or "Give me slack."	1 Pull	"Stop and search where you are."
3 Pulls	"Take up my slack."	2 Pulls	"Move away from the weight."
4 Pulls	"Haul me up."	3 Pulls	"Face the weight and go right."
2-1 Pulls	"I understand" or "Talk to me."	4 Pulls	"Face the weight and go left."
3-2 Pulls	"More air."		
4-3 Pulls	"Less air."		
Special Signals From the Diver		Emergency Signals From the Diver	
1-2-3 Pulls	"Send me a square mark."	2-2-2 Pulls	"I am fouled and need the assistance of another diver."
5 Pulls	"Send me a line."	3-3-3 Pulls	"I am fouled but can clear myself."
2-1-2 Pulls	"Send me a slate."	4-4-4 Pulls	"Haul me up immediately."
ALL EMERGENCY SIGNALS SHALL BE ANSWERED AS GIVEN EXCEPT 4-4-4			

3.5.3 Pre-Dive Operations

The area in which the diver dresses and then uses for access to the water should be kept clear of all debris and items that could present slip, trip or fall hazards to the diver. The tender should always be available to physically assist the fully dressed diver.

The tender should assist the diver in donning all equipment and ensure all belts, clips and

harnesses are securely fastened. The dive tender and/or the box operator should ensure that all air systems and communications are functioning properly. The tender should complete all pre-dive checks as specified in the Surface Supplied Air Checklist (Attachment 1).

3.5.4 Entering the Water

The tender should assist the diver with entering the water and always maintain a grip on the umbilical. If the diver jumps into the water, it is the tender's responsibility to ensure that there are no obstacles in the diver's landing area. The tender should also give the diver enough slack in the umbilical to get into the water just below the surface. Immediately after the diver has entered the water, the tender should pull the diver back to the surface. Once back at the surface, the diver should ensure that he or she is properly weighted, do another communication check, and the tender and the diver should assess the diver for leaks (bubbling, particularly around the mask). Once the diver is ready to submerge, the tender should give the diver enough slack to descend. Since the tender is usually in the best position to witness the diver submerging, the tender should also call out to the box operator and/or divemaster when the diver has submerged so the submergence time can be recorded.

3.5.5 Depth Monitoring

When a diver is in the water, the box operator must maintain regular, open communication. Once the diver has descended to the work site, the operator should monitor the diver's depth using the pneumo. Using the correct pneumo gauge (red or white) for the diver's umbilical, the operator should open the pneumo valve below the gauge by turning it in a counter clockwise direction until the depth gauge reads a depth that is known to be deeper than the diver, or until the diver reports bubbles coming from the open end of the pneumo hose. The operator should then close the valve, monitor the depth gauge and record the diver's depth (measured in feet of sea water [fsw]) when the gauge needle stabilizes. The operator should monitor the diver's depth frequently, especially when the diver is moving around. The Divemaster or designee records this information on the tending form during the dive. The diver may also choose to use a computer or depth gauge to monitor their depth in lieu of using a pneumo hose.

3.5.6 Umbilical Pressure

The control box operator should ensure that the diver is getting sufficient breathing gas pressure at depth. The umbilical pressure gauge on the control box should read between 115 psi and 225 psi depending upon the specifications of the mask or dive helmet being utilized, bottom depth, and particular control box instructions. Lower umbilical pressure results in more effort required on the diver's part to breathe. The USEPA typically maintains umbilical pressure at 150 psi for light to moderate work loads. If the diver is performing manual labor (e.g., pounding sediment cores or moving heavy objects) and is breathing hard, it may be necessary to increase the umbilical pressure by turning the umbilical pressure knob until the diver reports that gas flow is comfortable.

3.5.7 Breathing Gas Supply

The control box operator must maintain careful watch over the pressure gauge on the line that is supplying gas to the diver. When the gauge reads approximately 500 psi, the operator should

flip the selector handle to the other incoming gas line. The selector handle must be turned all the way to its stop for breathing gas to flow properly. As soon as is practical, the operator, or designee, should replace the spent gas cylinder with a full cylinder. When using SCUBA tanks, the spent tank valve should be closed, and the pressure should be bled out of the hose between the tank and the control box using the bleed valve on the yoke. Upon removing the spent tank and replacing it with a full tank, the bleed valve should be closed and the tank valve should slowly be fully opened. The operator should ensure that the pressure gauge on the control box indicates a full tank. This procedure should be followed each time a spent tank is replaced. It is the responsibility of the control box operator to ensure that a sufficient gas supply is readily available for all diving.

Prior to switching the gas source, the operator should notify the diver to suspend the current activity, locate the EGS manifold block and be ready to switch to emergency gas. Once the diver has responded to the operator and has put a hand on the manifold block, the operator can switch the gas source. In the event that a gas line or a seal (O-ring or fitting) should fail upon changing pressure, the diver will be prepared to immediately switch to emergency breathing gas.

If a seal should fail and gas pressure to the system is lost, the operator must switch back to the previous tank and inform the diver to be ready to switch to the EGS. The box operator should replace the failed tank with a new tank as quickly as possible and switch to the replacement tank. Once the situation has been resolved, it is the divemaster's decision to either continue or terminate the mission.

3.5.8 Emergency Gas Supply

It is the responsibility of the divemaster, the diver and the tender to each ensure that the valve of the bail-out bottle is opened after it is connected to the manifold block and that the manifold block knob is closed. The bail-out bottle pressure should be checked and recorded prior to every working dive. The EGS should be mounted upside down, and the divemaster should verify that the diver can reach the tank valve to re-open it, should it become closed.

3.5.9 Ending a Dive

At the termination of each dive, the operator should notify the surface support crew that the diver is ready to ascend. If conditions permit the diver to control the ascent, the tender should slowly pull in the slack from the umbilical as it becomes available. The umbilical should be coiled neatly in a pile either in its shipping box or on the deck/dock/ground behind the tender. The umbilical should be coiled in alternating over-under loops to facilitate the next deployment.

If conditions do not permit the diver to control the ascent (e.g., low visibility or mid-water current), the tender should gently pull in all slack umbilical and the operator should have the diver swim on the bottom in the direction of the umbilical. Once the diver is close to or below the boat/platform, the diver should exhaust air in their suit to become negatively buoyant and the tender should use the umbilical to lift the diver up to the surface. The tender must maintain an ascent rate of no more than 30 feet per minute, and the operator must continually communicate with the diver to ensure that the ascent rate is not causing discomfort (e.g., reverse squeeze). The box operator can monitor the diver's rate of ascent simply by watching the pneumo gauge. The operator should warn diver if any surface hazards are present.

Once the diver is on the surface, the tender should call out to the divemaster or box operator who should record surface time on the dive log. Once at the dive platform, the tender should

assist the diver exiting the water. When diving in contaminated water, proper decontamination methods should be utilized prior to undressing the diver.

3.5.9 Switching Divers

When switching divers, the same harness rig is typically worn but the next diver's personal FFM should be used. To switch FFMs, the box operator should close the gate on the umbilical gas outlet, and the tender should push the purge button on the first diver's FFM to bleed the pressure out of the breathing gas hose. The FFM should then be removed and the next divers mask put on the system. Dive computers must not be shared

3.5.10 Termination of Dive Operations

When the day's dive operations have been completed, the control box should be properly stowed. The main power switch should be turned off, and the battery power should be checked.

If the battery is low, the box should be charged overnight prior to the next dive operation. The microphone should be disconnected and stowed in the battery compartment, and the com line connectors should be gently pulled. The gas supply tank valves should be closed and the bleed valves on the tank yokes should be opened to depressurize the supply hoses. The SCUBA tanks should be taken off the system, and any tanks that have not been exhausted should be capped for use on future dives. Tanks that have been exhausted should not be capped, and should be kept separate from the full tanks so that they can be refilled. The FFM purge button should be pushed to bleed the gas out of the umbilical. The gas supply gate should then be closed. Using a wrench, the umbilical lines (both breathing gas and pneumo) should be removed from the box.

The breathing gas hose should be capped immediately upon being disconnected from the box. The gas outlets should then be capped, finger-tight, with their brass caps. The control box should then be closed, and latched so that the o-ring seal on the lid makes the control box watertight.

After decontamination, the umbilical should be coiled neatly in its shipping box. The harness should be disconnected by unclipping the umbilical and using a wrench to disconnect the breathing gas supply hose. The supply hose should be capped immediately after being disconnected. The pony bottle valve should be closed, and the valve on the manifold block should be briefly opened to bleed the hose pressure so that the regulator first stage can be removed from the bottle and capped. After all gear has dried, the umbilical, harness, pony bottle and regulator should be stowed in the umbilical shipping case, and all of the latches should be tightened. Prior to shipping the case by air, the pony bottle must either be removed or emptied.

3.6 Surface Supplied Air Equipment Maintenance and Storage

At the conclusion of daily dive operations, the panels of the control box should be wiped with a damp cloth. After the project is completed all equipment should be allowed to air dry prior to being stored.

The control box should be serviced by a qualified technician on an annual basis. All batteries used in the control box, should be maintained according to the manufacturers recommendations. When batteries no longer take a full charge or the battery life is diminished, they should be replaced according to the manufacturers procedures.

The breathing gas hose must be pressure tested to 1.5 times its working pressure by a qualified facility on an annual basis. The breathing gas hose must be kept clean, inside and out. It is important to ensure that both ends of the hose are properly capped when the hose is not in use to prevent dust and particulate contaminants from getting into the breathing system.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of the surface supplied dive team will have the experience or training necessary to perform the tasks assigned to them in a safe and efficient manner. This experience and training will include the use of tools and equipment needed for the specified tasks and techniques required for surface supplied diving. Each member of the dive team will also have training in the emergency procedures required in the event of a diving accident. Each dive team member will only be assigned tasks in accordance with that person's training and experience.

A simple surface supplied diving operation (a single diver, shallow, short duration dives) requires a minimum of four people; a diver, a stand-by diver, a tender, and control box operator/divemaster. However, dive projects requiring multiple dives, depths greater than 30 feet, and multiple divers may require a larger minimum crew. If two divers are in the water simultaneously, the minimum of six people are required; two divers, two tenders, a stand-by diver, a control box operator/divemaster. These minimum numbers assume that all personnel, with the exception of tenders, are qualified divers who could switch duties from surface support to in-water operations. The responsibilities of the dive team are described in the EPA Diving Safety Manual, but those responsibilities specific to surface supplied diving follow:

4.1 Divemaster

The divemaster carries the overall responsibility for the safety and performance of the dive operation. On small operations, the divemaster may also assume the responsibilities of another surface support person or even perform in-water duties if there is a qualified divemaster available to assume the divemaster surface responsibilities.

4.2 Diver

Divers are primarily responsible for performing the in-water work. The diver is also responsible for ensuring all dive equipment is present, and in working order. While in the water, the diver is responsible to carry out work duties as instructed, and to maintain open communication with surface personnel. The surface supply control box operator and the Divemaster should be aware of the diver's status at all times. It is the diver's responsibility to ensure that he/she is clear objectives of the dive and is aware of all safety equipment and procedures that may be required.

4.3 Stand-by Diver

For all surface supplied diving operations, at least one qualified member of the team will be designated as a stand-by diver. The stand-by diver will be ready to enter the water promptly in case of an emergency.

4.4 Dive Tender

The primary responsibility of the dive tender is to assist the diver while preparing for, conducting, and recovering from in-water operations. The dive tender will maintain control of the surface supply air umbilical, ensuring that the diver has enough umbilical to work freely, but not so much umbilical that an

entanglement hazard is posed. The dive tender will also be responsible for visually tracking the diver's location while in the water. The dive tender and all surface personnel are responsible for advising other vessels of the dive operation and warning off any vessels that may pose a hazard to the diver. Although the tender does not need to be a certified diver, the tender must be trained to perform the required duties and have an understanding of the equipment utilized by the diver.

4.5 Surface Supply Control Box Operator

A qualified and trained person will be dedicated to running the surface supply control box. This person shall have no other duties that may distract them from their primary responsibility of maintaining sufficient breathing gas delivery and communications with the diver. The dive control box operator in conjunction with the divemaster must be aware of the diver's profile (maximum allowable depth and bottom time) and actual bottom time and depth to ensure that all diving is performed in a safe manner and the diver does not exceed the no-decompression limits (NDL) or the dive-specific profile limits. The control box operator is directly responsible for the safety of the diver. In certain circumstances, at the discretion of the divemaster, the surface supply control box operator may also maintain the dive logs.

4.6 Boat Operator

The boat operator is responsible for all boat operations in support of the dive operation. The boat operator must have experience or training in operating the vessel during dive operations and performing emergency procedures that may be required. During the dive, if the boat is secured in position (anchored or docked), this person may also perform the duties of one of the surface support personnel. .

5.0 REFERENCES

Diving Systems International (DSI). 1996. *Dive Control System - 2A, Operations and Maintenance Manual*.

Dive Labs, [Surface Supply Breathing Requirements and Recommendations for Kirby Morgan Helmets and Band Masks, 2008](http://www.kirbymorgan.com/PDF/Checklists/Surface_Supply_Requirements_02-17-2009.pdf), 37 pp, http://www.kirbymorgan.com/PDF/Checklists/Surface_Supply_Requirements_02-17-2009.pdf.

Kirby Morgan Dive Systems Inc. 2009, *Kirby Morgan Air Control System 5 Operations and Maintenance Manual*.

US Navy Diving Manual, 2008, Revision 6.
http://www.supsalv.org/00c3_publications.asp

SURFACE SUPPLIED AIR CHECKLIST

Diver: _____

Tender: _____

Divemaster: _____

Date: _____

Dive
#: _____

- ___ Dive and Health and Safety Briefing
- ___ Oxygen and First Aid Equipment Ready and Accessible
- ___ Dive Flag Up, Dive Ladder Down and in Water (if needed)
- ___ Set-up Surface Supply Control Box
- ___ Purge Air Lines
- ___ Over-pressure Relief Valve Installed on 1st Stage Regulator on Pony Bottle
- ___ Non-return Valve Between Umbilical and Manifold Block and is Functioning
- ___ Pony Bottle Tank Pressure (_____ psi)
- ___ Primary Tank Pressure (_____ psi)
- ___ Secondary Tank Pressure (_____ psi)

-
- ___ Ensure Gas Flow to Mask or Helmet and Test Primary and Backup Gas Supply Including Function of Valve on Manifold Block
 - ___ Communication Test
 - ___ Ensure Manifold Block is in a Closed Position (for EGS) and Pony Bottle is Open
 - ___ Assist Diver Dressing
 - ___ Dry/Wet Suit/Inner Gloves/Hood
 - ___ Weight Belt _____ lbs
 - ___ Diver Harness
 - ___ Outer Gloves/Fins
 - ___ Clip Umbilical to Diver Harness
 - ___ Attach Com Line, Dry Suit Hose, Pneumo Hose
 - ___ Check Position/Function of Manifold Block
 - ___ Standby Diver Readied
 - ___ Ensure Primary and Backup Air Is Open
 - ___ DON Mask/Helmet and Check Communications
 - ___ Enter Water
 - ___ Dive Log (time of start of dive/starting tank pressure/conditions)
 - ___ Check Communications

-
- Leak Test
 - Check Buoyancy
 - Complete Dive Log (time of end of dive/final tank pressure/comments)

APPENDIX P

Tethered Diving SOP

**US EPA
TETHERED DIVING STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

- 1.0 OBJECTIVE
- 2.0 APPLICABILITY
- 3.0 DESCRIPTION
 - 3.1 Certification and Physical Examination
 - 3.2 General Dive Equipment and Safety Equipment
 - 3.3 Documentation
 - 3.4 Tethered Diving Equipment
 - 3.4.1 Diver Dress
 - 3.4.2 Breathing Regulator
 - 3.4.3 Diver Harness
 - 3.4.3 Tether
 - 3.4.5 Emergency Gas Supply
 - 3.5 Tethered Diving Operations
 - 3.5.1 Procedures
 - 3.5.1.1 Donning Gear and Water Entry/Descent
 - 3.5.1.2 On the Bottom
 - 3.5.1.3 Ascent
 - 3.5.1.4 Doffing Gear
 - 3.5.2 Communications
 - 3.5.2.1 Voice Communications Unit
 - 3.5.2.2 Line-Pull Communications
 - 3.5.3 Vessel Operations
 - 3.5.4 Emergency Procedures
- 4.0 PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 4.1 Diver
 - 4.2 Tender/Divemaster
 - 4.3 Standby Diver
- 5.0 REFERENCES

1.0 OBJECTIVE

This standard operating procedure (SOP) states the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) policy concerning tethered diving operations. Procedures for general dive operations are specified the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. This SOP in not intended to be a substitute for actual hands-on training.

2.0 APPLICABILITY

Tethered SCUBA diving is a tended diving method where one diver in the water is line tended by surface personnel and directed to perform a variety of underwater tasks, which could include light work or scientific tasks. OSHA also requires that standby divers for working dives be line tended. This method is much like that of surface supplied diving in many ways other than the virtually unlimited air supply. Typical tethered diving equipment, personnel, and procedure is described below. These procedures apply to EPA employees and contractors working directly for EPA that are engaged in surface supplied diving operations. This SOP presumes and requires prior training and experience with tethered diving.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

3.1 Certification and Physical Examinations

All divers must be dive certified and medically qualified to perform their diving duties, as specified in USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.2 General Dive Equipment and Safety Equipment

Each component of a diver's equipment shall be maintained in a safe operating condition, and shall be inspected, tested, serviced and logged as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. All appropriate safety equipment shall be available at the dive site as specified in the Dive Safety Plan and USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.3 Documentation

Project-specific Dive Plans and Dive Safety Plans shall be issued prior to performing dive operations, and all dives shall be logged as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual. The Unit Dive Officer (UDO) shall maintain logs of each diver's certifications, medical clearance to dive, and all health and safety training (e.g., cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR], first aid and oxygen administration) as specified in the USEPA Diving Safety Manual.

3.4 Tethered Diving Equipment

3.4.1 Diver Dress

Tethered SCUBA diving equipment nominally includes standard diver dress, e.g. wetsuit/drysuit, fins, and weight belt, as well as particular equipment to tethered diving needs. These other items include a full face mask with communications, strength member with quick release snap shackle tether, hardwired or wireless communications, and man-rated safety harness for rated for lifting the diver from the water. In addition, a cutting device is

recommended for the diver within easy reach, e.g. EMT shears mounted on the harness.

3.4.2 Breathing Regulator

EPA divers may wear a standard dive mask but will typically wear a full face mask (FFM) for to provide vox communications. The FFM is typically equipped with communication equipment (microphones and earphones) for this application. The FFM allows for hardwired communication and in conjunction with a drysuit with hood and drygloves will give the diver some protection from polluted water, when using the positive pressure version to minimize leakage. When diving in non-polluted water, a wetsuit may be utilized. Typically, the mask is used with an ear/microphone attachment, such that the diver may be in constant hardline communication with the surface.

3.4.3 Diver Harness

A diver harness is necessary to connect the diver securely to the tether line for all tethered dive operations. This allows the diver to be towed back to the point of entry. The harness is worn underneath the BCD or backpack on top of the wetsuit or dry suit. The harness should be rated to pull the diver from the water, in the event of an emergency on the surface or beneath the water. The harness may also allow for an attachment for a hard-wire communication (com) line to prevent straining of the communication links. The com line must be clipped to the diver's harness prior to the start of the dive.

Note: Buoyancy compensation device (BCD) D-rings have inadequate strength for connecting the tether line to the harness, as they cannot support the diver's entire weight and dynamic load when the tender needs to quickly retrieve the diver. Breakage of a BCD D-ring could result in serious injury to the diver, as the diver's head is connected to the tether via the communications cable, absent the secure harness connection.

3.4.4 Tether

While any kind of line may be used in conjunction with line signals, typically a com rope is used to allow for constant communications with the diver. Care must be taken in tending the diver when moving in arc patterns (discussed below), that the line is not hung up and frayed on sharp underwater objects. The tether should be fitted with a quick release snap-shackle to allow the diver to egress to the surface should the tether become irreconcilably entangled in bottom debris. The tether may also be marked in intervals for measuring distances used in search patterns, for example. Tethers can be made in most any length, though 200 and 300 foot tethers are typical for their dive operations. Generally, the tether required must be the distance from the dive platform added to the depth to the dive site multiplied by 1.5 (NOAA, 2009), e.g. 50 feet from the dive site at a 50 foot depth would be 150 foot of tether. A tether longer than 300 foot can present some span of control problems with a dive platform under anchor, in adequately fending off nearby vessel traffic in a timely fashion. The tether should be stowed in a bucket or bag of some kind, with the tender end going in first, diver end last, to keep it from being stepped on and damaged, and to avoid tripping/falling hazards on the dive platform. The container should allow for easy decontamination and segregation of contaminated line from other gear.

3.4.5 Emergency Gas Supply

An emergency gas supply (EGS) is necessary for tethered diving operations should the primary air supply be exhausted. The EGS supply is typically controlled through a manifold block, connected to the BCD. The manifold block should have a one way valve, such that opening the block does not equalize the primary and EGS cylinders. The EGS itself may be a pony bottle connected to a larger primary bottle up to a fully redundant SCUBA bottle, depending on diving depth (Barsky, 1999). The EGS bottle is left open for diving, while the manifold block is in the closed position, such that the diver is breathing off the primary air supply, but may access the reserve supply by simply turning the manifold knob, similar to a surface supply configuration.

Note: This is different than a non FFM configuration, where the pony bottle is normally left off (e.g. NOAA mouthpiece reserve air supply system) to prevent a free flow from emptying the reserve supply. A 6 to 19 cubic foot EGS may be adequate for shallow diving, while a 30 cubic foot tank should be used at or below 100 feet. The size of the bail-out bottle is determined based upon the type of water, i.e. contaminated vs. non-contaminated, working depth, type of equipment, i.e. FFM vs. helmet and the air consumption rate of the individual diver.

The EGS should be mounted upside down such that the diver can reach the tank valve, should it accidentally be left closed. A submerged pressure gauge must also be in plain view of the diver so that they may see the current status of their EGS bottle. For example, if the manifold block is bumped, the diver may start breathing off the EGS without their knowledge. Frequent checking of the primary gas supply SPG, bailout block and EGS SPG will help to ensure that the diver is continuously breathing off the primary air supply. Also, as tethered diving is often used for low visibility situations, analog gauges should be used as digital gauges cannot be read when pressing the gauge directly against the FFM in true blackout conditions. For diving with a dry suit, the inflator whip should be connected to the manifold block such that suit inflation may still be achieved when using the EGS.

3.5 Tethered Diving Operations

3.5.1 Procedures

As noted above, the tethered diving operation normally involves at least three divers. This allows for safe and efficient diving by rotating through the crew of 3, especially for deeper dive profiles. The 3 person rotation allows for ample surface intervals for the diver who has just dived, and then becomes the Divemaster/Tender, the diver who has been out of the water for the duration of the last dive, who becomes the standby diver, and the diver, who has been out of the water for at least two dives worth of time.

3.5.1.1 Donning Gear and Water Entry/Descent

Both the tender and standby diver should assist the diver in donning gear if needed. Special attention is paid to placement and setting of the manifold block/EGS and verification that the diver can reach the block and EGS valves easily, and without looking, as tethered diving is often used in low visibility

environments. The primary and EGS tank pressures are checked and recorded. Comm. checks are performed and volumes/ear piece placement adjusted as needed. The diver is deployed with an extra loop of line available (to avoid jerking the diver during descent) and the tender arrests their descent into the water via the tether line and holds them at the surface until they can complete a mask check.

The tender uses both hands to tend the line, so as to ensure that the diver is firmly held in place. The tether line is never wound around the tender in any way for two reasons: 1) the line may be contaminated, and this could leave polluted water and sediment on the tender, and 2), the tender could be pulled into the water with the line wound around them. The tender should use gloves to prevent chafing, and these should be covered by disposable gloves if there is any chance of contamination in surface water or sediment.

The tether should be managed in a portion of the dive platform considered to be the “hot zone” where it can be appropriately decontaminated and otherwise managed without tracking contamination throughout the vessel during tending at contaminated sites. The diver controls the rate of descent, including making requests for the amount and rate of slack given by the surface to ensure too much line is not paid into the water column, resulting in entanglements.

3.5.1.2 On the Bottom

Directing the diver is undertaken in a different manner than in buddy type SCUBA operations, where movements are relative to the tethered line itself. For example, the tender may instruct the diver to swim “toward the line,” “away from the line,” “take a 90 right,” “take a 90 left,” and so on. The diver trusts that the surface can direct them where they need to go, as in conducting a search pattern, “Hold line tension, and swim with the tether at your left.” Surface may ask the diver to conduct search patterns via an arc, sweep, or out and back methods, using these line signals. Based on whether there is visibility on the bottom, this will determine the distance between diver sweeps. (Hendrick, 2000). The surface will regularly ask for pressure checks from the diver, and the diver should also volunteer these to the surface. If asked during a crucial task for a pressure check, the diver should ask the surface to “standby.” The surface will hold tension at all times, and release tension only when requested by the diver. Without tension, the surface loses good information on the status of the line, i.e. tangled or untangled, and may actually cause the line to tangle by allowing it to drag on the bottom. Absence of tension also prevents backup communications from happening as discussed in emergency procedures, below. Equipment may be conveyed to a stationary diver nearby the platform via a loop in the line. If this is done, tension should be maintained in the line should verbal communications fail, and once the tool is conveyed, all slack should be removed.

3.5.1.3 Ascent

The surface may control the diver's ascent, if the diver cannot control their own ascent due to weighting, currents, etc. Using the tether, the tender will give at least a 2 second count for every foot of line they pull in. When the diver nears the platform, the tender will instruct the diver to put up their hand for the last part of the ascent to protect their head from the hull of the vessel. The tender will remain on comm. until the diver is aboard and decontaminated, as needed. The line will be managed in the dive platform's "hot zone" with gloves such that it can be decontaminated at the end of dive operations, and otherwise managed to avoid material tracking throughout the vessel.

3.5.1.4 Doffing Gear

Decontamination, such as a potable water decontamination, will take place as needed before other tasks, focusing on the mask and glove areas when conducting repetitive diving. The tender will ensure that the diver leaves the bottom with sufficient pressure to undergo whatever type of decontamination deemed necessary.

3.5.2 Communications

3.5.2.1 Voice Communications Unit

The voice communications unit is utilized by the tender while tending the diver's line to maintain constant verbal communication with the diver and standby diver. Communication may be one-way, surface-to-diver, or two way allowing the diver to speak with the surface either by hard-wire coupled with the tether or by through-water (e.g., acoustic or sonic) transmission. The voice communications unit may be operated with either a "voice operated switch," also known as VOX (or Voice Operated eXchange) or in a "push-to-talk" mode in which the diver's and operator's microphone are button activated. The VOX is a switch that operates when sound over a certain threshold is detected. It is used to turn on a transmitter when the diver speaks and is turned off when they stop speaking. The tender communications unit allows the tender to talk with the diver via a headset and belt clip communications unit.

The tender unit typically uses replaceable batteries, which should be changed out on a daily basis to ensure constant communications. The vessel should have one set of batteries per day for the dive operation, plus one spare set. Care should also be taken when installing batteries in the unit, as the battery compartment soldering can be quite fragile. Rechargeable batteries are beneficial for this purpose to minimize waste generation from daily dive operations. When connecting the headset to the belt clip unit, a "squeal" should initially be heard as the unit powers on. Absence of this sound can indicate that the batteries are dead, or that the unit is otherwise not functioning. When the unit is not in use, the headset should be disconnected from the belt clip unit to conserve battery power.

3.5.2.2 Line-Pull Communications

In the event of loss of voice communications, the dive unit should practice backup line signals to ensure the dive can be safely and efficiently aborted.

Example standard line-pull signals are included below from the US Navy Dive Manual, revision 6, Table 8-3.

Example Emergency Line-pull Signals

Primary Diver to Tender:

- 2-2-2 *I am in a difficulty but I am OK, I need assistance, send the backup diver.*
- 3-3-3 *I am entangled and OK, I am stopping to handle it myself but ready the backup diver*
- 4-4-4 *I am not OK, I need immediate assistance.*

Primary Diver to Standby Diver:

- Big Circular Motion: *I am entangled here (indicate where the entanglement is by putting the backup diver hands on it).*
- Tap Standby's Hand on Primary Divers Chest *I am injured here (indicate the injury location).*
- Tap Standbys Divers Hand to Primary Divers Second Stage *I am running low on air.*

Standby Diver to Primary Diver:

- Place primary's hand back on his carabineer and give three squeezes *I am leaving now but will be back. The standby diver goes back to return with additional air to allow more time to deal with the problem.*

USN Revision 6 Full Set of Line Pull Signals:

Table 8-3. Line-Pull Signals.

From Tender to Diver		Searching Signals (Without Circling Line)	
1 Pull	"Are you all right?" When diver is descending, one pull means "Stop."	7 Pulls	"Go on (or off) searching signals."
2 Pulls	"Going Down." During ascent, two pulls mean "You have come up too far; go back down until we stop you."	1 Pull	"Stop and search where you are."
3 Pulls	"Stand by to come up."	2 Pulls	"Move directly away from the tender if given slack; move toward the tender if strain is taken on the life line."
4 Pulls	"Come up."	3 Pulls	"Face your umbilical, take a strain, move right."
2-1 Pulls	"I understand" or "Talk to me."	4 Pulls	"Face your umbilical, take a strain, move left."
3-2 Pulls	"Ventilate."		
4-3 Pulls	"Circulate."		
From Diver to Tender		Searching Signals (With Circling Line)	
1 Pull	"I am all right." When descending, one pull means "Stop" or "I am on the bottom."	7 Pulls	"Go on (or off) searching signals."
2 Pulls	"Lower" or "Give me slack."	1 Pull	"Stop and search where you are."
3 Pulls	"Take up my slack."	2 Pulls	"Move away from the weight."
4 Pulls	"Haul me up."	3 Pulls	"Face the weight and go right."
2-1 Pulls	"I understand" or "Talk to me."	4 Pulls	"Face the weight and go left."
3-2 Pulls	"More air."		
4-3 Pulls	"Less air."		
Special Signals From the Diver		Emergency Signals From the Diver	
1-2-3 Pulls	"Send me a square mark."	2-2-2 Pulls	"I am fouled and need the assistance of another diver."
5 Pulls	"Send me a line."	3-3-3 Pulls	"I am fouled but can clear myself."
2-1-2 Pulls	"Send me a slate."	4-4-4 Pulls	"Haul me up immediately."
ALL EMERGENCY SIGNALS SHALL BE ANSWERED AS GIVEN EXCEPT 4-4-4			

3.5.3 Vessel Operations

Vessel operations necessitate important tethered diving safety procedures, which include:

1. All boat/ship propellers must be deactivated prior to initiating dive operations.
2. A small boat must be on anchor before deploying the tethered diver.
3. Ships do not need to be on anchor for a ship husbandry dive, e.g. clearing a fouled propeller in deep water.
4. A bow and stern line should be available. While it is not required to be at a 2 point or greater anchor configuration, sudden wind changes may necessitate a two point anchoring system to complete a dive safely.
5. If the boat were to swing on its anchor, it is important that sufficient slack is given and/or tension is kept on the diver to ensure they are not swept away in current, or subjected to sudden changes in pressure.
6. When operating near channel, a "Security" call should be made to all concerned traffic over VHF channel 16 and vessel traffic and channel 16 communications should be monitored to determine if large vessels are inbound.
7. An Alpha Flag (blue and white) as well as the standard diver down flag must be flown from the vessel during dive operations.

As the dive platform cannot fend off other boat traffic by means of physical presence, care should be given how far channel ward a tethered diver is allowed to travel. Consideration of notice to mariners, broadcast of an encumbered vessel status either via VHF and/or automatic identification system (AIS) could also be considered.

3.5.4 Emergency Procedures

Before the tethered diver undertakes a working dive, it is important that they have practiced how to free an entangled line, disconnecting from the tether, unconscious diver rescue, and clearing a flooded mask in a training situation. During the dive briefing, backup communication line pull signals must be reviewed and memorized by the dive crew. See the US Navy Revision 6 Table 8-3 line pull signal table below.

It is also important that the dive crew review what it sounds like for the communications cable wet connection for the hard line com to become disconnected underwater at the diver end. Absence of sound for the diver should indicate that they need to reconnect the plug, and/or begin using line pull signals to communicate their status to the surface. A fresh set of batteries should be on hand topside, in the event of communications loss, to ensure that voice communications can be re-established. A fully redundant tender headset and communications box might be kept on board in the event that these become flooded or cease operating.

A diver recall could also be kept on hand to supplement line pull signals should hard line communications be lost. The diver must also be prepared to disconnect from the tether, in consultation with the surface. The diver should not disconnect from the tether without first telling the surface, "going off comm." to ensure that the surface understands that communications will be lost for a period of time. Unplanned loss of communication (voice and line pulls) of the tethered diver should lead to immediate deployment of the standby diver unless the divemaster determines that conditions are too hazardous for rescue to be undertaken.

For retrieval of an unconscious diver on the bottom, the standby diver would be deployed on tether, and follow the primary diver's tether to the bottom. Once with the unconscious

diver, the victim should be oriented head up, and the surface notified that they may haul the pair up.

For trapped diver situations, a “rescue bottle” could be maintained for the standby diver to convey to a trapped primary tethered diver. The rescue bottle could be outfitted with a quick disconnect coupling (female), so that the bottle may be connected underwater to the trapped diver’s SCUBA bailout block manifold quick disconnect fitting (male), along with a mouthpiece second stage and SPG.

4.0 PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Typically tethered diving operations consist of a three person team, the diver, the standby diver, and the divemaster/tender.

4.1 Diver

The diver, unlike in the conventional SCUBA diving buddy system, will be diving alone. This takes some adjustment for the diver, and reminders from their divemaster that they will be in constant communication with the surface. Taking the dive slowly and not rushing through tasks is key to avoiding panic, but also in minimizing air consumption. While the diver is still responsible for checking their air supply and reporting this to topside support, unlike surface supplied diving, other adjustments are needed. Often the dive may be controlled from the surface depending upon the task being performed. If the dive is primarily surface controlled, the diver will need to adjust to not being primarily in control of their dive, i.e. the divemaster will be in constant communication with them, and will instruct the diver what to do, and when to do it. As with all dives, the diver or divemaster may end the dive for any reason.

4.2 Tender/Divemaster

The divemaster/tender will assist the diver in dressing in, tending the line, and doffing gear at the end of the dive. The tender should also be a diver prepared to dive each day, especially for deeper dive profiles. Divemaster responsibilities are the same as generally defined for buddy type SCUBA operations e.g. the divemaster continues to be in charge of the overall dive, except that they can hear the diver throughout the dive, and should be monitoring the diver constantly for signs of anxiety. Breathing rate of the diver is a clue to their mental status. As needed, the tender should ask the diver to stop what they are doing, rest, and breathe (e.g. more deeply or slowly). As with all dives, the Divemaster must remain undistracted such that they can monitor the surface for danger from incoming boat traffic and any other hazards.

4.3 Standby Diver

All tethered diving operations require a standby diver. The standby diver must be ready to get into the water within several minutes, and be dressed in their dry suit or wetsuit either half way, or fully at the Divemaster’s discretion.

Disclaimer: This SOP is an illustration of steps to be taken to conduct tethered SCUBA diving operations and minimize the diver’s exposure to polluted water conditions and is not the official view of the USEPA. Mention of any specific brand or model instrument or material does not constitute endorsement by the USEPA.

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APPENDIX Q

**Standard Operating Procedures for
Diver Decontamination**

USEPA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

DIVER DECONTAMINATION

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DIVER DECONTAMINATION

1.0 OBJECTIVE

This standard operating procedure (SOP) states the policy concerning decontamination of personnel involved in contaminated water diving. This SOP is not intended as a substitute for actual hands-on training.

2.0 APPLICABILITY

These procedures apply to all personnel, including subcontractors under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supervision, engaged in diving operations. This SOP presumes and requires prior experience with diving and decontamination procedures.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

3.1 Contaminated Water Diving

For this SOP, contaminated water is defined as any body of water that is suspected of containing chemical or biological agents in concentrations that could potentially harm an unprotected diver and/or surface support personnel. Unless a body of water is known to be clean, some degree of contamination must be assumed. The level and type of contamination will determine the decontamination procedure required.

Since a river or a large body of water (e.g., a lake or ocean) has flow or circulation allowing for removal or dilution of suspected contaminants, these are generally of less concern than diving in a closed body of water (e.g., a pond or a flooded quarry) which has no flow and significantly less potential for dilution of contaminants.

In general, most persistent biological and chemical contaminants tend to concentrate in sediment rather than in the water column (Hendrick, *et al.* 2000, Hoffman, *et al.* 2003; US Navy 2004). Therefore, simply remaining above and not coming into contact with the sediment may reduce the diver's potential exposure.

It is the responsibility of the Divemaster in charge, with concurrence of the Unit Dive Officer (UDO), to determine whether sufficient contaminant information is available and whether conditions are appropriate for diving. All contaminated water diving will be performed using appropriate exposure protection. For contaminated water diving, this document assumes all divers will wear, at a minimum, a full-face mask and a dry suit with mating dry gloves. The dry suit material should have a smooth outer surface which does not trap contaminants and is capable of being thoroughly decontaminated. Some dry suit manufacturers have had their suit materials tested against a variety of contaminants in the laboratory using ASTM methods (Viking 2001, Whites reference).

To minimize the number of personnel potentially exposed when performing dive operations in contaminated water, it is common US EPA Dive Team practice to use a single diver, on surface supplied air with hard-wired communications (see SOP *Surface Supplied Diving Operations*). During boat operations, it is easier to decontaminate one diver at a time. Additionally, surface supplied divers can share some dive gear (weight harness, fins, helmet, emergency gas supply [EGS]), limiting the amount of contaminated equipment. It is the Divemaster's responsibility to determine whether surface supplied diving and/or the use of a single diver is the safest/most effective means of completing the dive operation.

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3.2 Chemical Contaminants

Chemical contaminants include any chemicals which have leaked, spilled or dumped, or have been otherwise found in a body of water. Lists of the chemical substances most commonly spilled in inland and coastal waterways of the United States are available from a number of sources. The chemical spill lists were summarized for the US Navy's Experimental Diving Unit by Southwest Research Institute (Henkener and Ehlers, 2000). These chemicals may be located in the sediment, on the sediment, on the water surface, dissolved in the water column, or associated with particulates in the water column. Chemicals may pose risk from ingestion, inhalation and/or dermal contact (NIOSH 2005).

3.3 Biological Contaminants

Biological contaminants include harmful algal blooms (e.g., red tide), bacteria (e.g., fecal coliforms), viruses and parasites which could potentially harm an unprotected diver. A summary of potential biological hazards to Navy divers and swimmers was prepared for the US Navy's Experimental Diving Unit by Southwest Research Institute (Henkener and Ehlers, 2000). Biological contaminants may be present in storm water runoff and pose hazards to divers and to surface support personnel, especially when diving in near shore, urban areas within 36 hours of a storm event.

3.4 Site Area Definitions

Site area definitions are modified from the EPA's Standard Operating Safety Guides (EPA, 1992). Modifications were made to make the definitions applicable to dive operations. Figure 1 shows the flow and procedures at each stage of decontamination.

3.4.1 Exclusion Zone

The Exclusion Zone (EZ), also called the Hot Zone, is the area believed to be contaminated. This is the area in which site work will normally be performed. Each site will require definition of this zone. In some cases when divers are entering the water from the shoreline, performing their duties and returning to the shore, the body of water and a portion of the shoreline may be considered the EZ. In the case of boat operations, the body of water and that portion of the boat that a contaminated diver contacts may be considered the EZ. It is imperative that no personnel enter the EZ without the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). It is also imperative that no personnel, equipment or samples pass from the EZ to the Support Zone without going through the Contaminant Reduction Zone.

3.4.2 Contamination Reduction Zone

The Contamination Reduction Zone (CRZ), or Contamination Reduction Corridor, is defined as

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the area through which all personnel leaving the Exclusion Zone must pass through for decontamination. This is the primary working zone for decontamination personnel. All personnel in the CRZ must wear proper PPE for the task they have been assigned. The CRZ is a straight line operation, divers enter from the EZ and go through the decontamination process until being fully decontaminated and able to enter the Support Zone (SZ) on the other end. All equipment must also be decontaminated before moving into the SZ. All samples must be grossly decontaminated and encapsulated (e.g., placed inside resealable plastic bags) or placed in a sample container before being passed into the SZ.

3.4.3 Support Zone

The SZ is defined as the clean area outside of both the EZ and the Contamination Reduction Zone. No one should be allowed to leave the EZ and enter the SZ without completing the decontamination procedure, except in the event of a diving accident.

3.4.4 Emergency Decontamination Area

A separate area should be set aside between the EZ and SZ for emergency decontamination operations. In the case of a diving accident, it may not be possible to perform the complete decontamination procedure prior to initiating first aid (see Section 5.4).

3.4.5 Contaminant Zones During Boat Operations

When performing dive operations from a boat, the EZ is typically considered to be the water, the swim platform/ladder and a container on the boat used as the equipment drop. The other zones have to either be contained in the limited space available on the boat or completed at another location. It is the responsibility of the Divemaster to determine whether the space available on the boat is sufficient for the level of decontamination required. It is also the Divemaster's responsibility to determine whether conditions are appropriate for decontamination on the boat (e.g., sea state, weather).

For dive operations on a small boat involving low levels of contaminants and a simple decon, it is often the case that Contaminant Reduction is initiated on the dive platform or on the swim ladder and the area of the boat immediately around the platform/ladder. All hand-held equipment must be passed to the dive tender, who sets everything in an area designated for potentially contaminated equipment (e.g., a labeled container). The entire diver decontamination process is then carried out on the platform or ladder, and the dry suit is removed as soon as the diver is on the boat. The diver is considered to be in the SZ as soon as he or she is out of the dry suit and away from the immediate area of the platform/ladder.

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It is the Divemaster's responsibility to determine whether contaminant levels and sea state conditions are low enough to perform decontamination on the back of a small boat (or ladder/platform). If the vessel size/sea conditions warrant a decontamination procedure that cannot be done on the ladder or threatens to spread contamination within the vessel, the Divemaster must make alternate arrangements (e.g., using a second vessel or transporting the diver to shore for complete decontamination). Any decontamination process involving multiple steps, or the use of decontamination solutions that cannot be directly discharged into surface water, cannot be safely accomplished on a small, open boat. Additional factors to consider are the diver's air supply integrity during decontamination, the diver's fatigue and stress levels while holding on to a ladder for several minutes, and the potential for the spread of contamination to other parts of the vessel and personnel.

During some dive operations, a second boat or a barge is available to use as the CRZ. The second vessel should be securely rafted to the primary vessel. Divers may enter the water from the primary vessel, but always exit the water onto the CRZ vessel, and are decontaminated there before re-entering the primary vessel. During such operations, the barge is considered the CRZ and the primary boat is considered the SZ. Additional considerations include surface-supplied air source and placement. Under no circumstances should the supplied air source be on a different vessel than the diver. This may require a segregated space on the CRZ vessel for the source and operator. Likewise, divers using shared equipment (i.e., harnesses, tools) will both enter and exit the water from the CRZ vessel as these items are considered contaminated and should not enter the SZ until the final dive and complete decontamination. In most cases, when using two adjacent vessels for the dive operation, decontamination washes will be contained and transported off-site for temporary storage, testing, and disposal considerations.

It is not feasible to perform diver decontamination on some smaller vessels. For these situations the vessel shall be considered part of the EZ throughout the dive operation and the diver can be brought to the shore or a larger vessel for decontamination. If this is the case, the boat must be treated as part of the EZ throughout the entire operation until it has been decontaminated. All equipment and personnel leaving the vessel would also be required to pass through the CRZ before returning to the SZ. On a small boat, sufficient decontamination equipment should be available to remove gross contamination from the diver and the diver's face/neck seal area to allow the diver to safely remove the helmet/mask while returning to shore for full decontamination.

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3.5 Decontamination Plan

Dive personnel shall include a decontamination plan as part of every Dive Plan dealing with contaminated water. The Dive Plan shall be referenced in the site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASp). The Dive Plan should detail the steps required to properly decontaminate divers based on the known or suspected site contaminants. Included in the plan will be allowances for gross decontamination, equipment decontamination, and required decontamination solutions. Special concerns and procedures will be outlined in the Dive Plan.

If, during contaminated water dive operations, it is discovered that contamination is more severe than originally believed, it is the Divemaster's responsibility to determine whether appropriate decontamination equipment is available and whether conditions permit safe dive operations.

4.0 REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Equipment required for decontamination activities will be dependent on the level of decontamination required at each site. The equipment should be chosen from the following list based on need.

- Potable water
- Decontamination solutions (e.g., soap, water, bleach, etc.)
- Soft bristled brushes/sponges
- Paper towels
- Plastic sheeting
- Marking tape
- Water collection basins
- Hudson sprayer
- Decontamination shower
- Disinfectant wipes
- Stools
- Hand soap
- Emergency breathing gas supply
- Chemical/Water resistive suits
- Face shields/eye protection
- Rubber gloves/boot covers
- Rubber boots
- Other PPE
- Basins/Containers/Buckets

5.0 DIVING DECONTAMINATION OPERATIONS

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5.1 General Decontamination Procedures

Prior to any dive operation, the level of decontamination required shall be determined by the Divemaster with concurrence of the UDO and Health and Safety Officer, based on the information available. The anticipated decontamination procedure will be spelled out in the site-specific Dive Plan. During the dive operation, the Divemaster may alter the decontamination procedure, based on site conditions and any additional information available. Since real-time contaminant levels are rarely available, the Divemaster must use professional judgment, weighted on the conservative side of safety.

This SOP addresses decontamination of divers and equipment after operations in moderately contaminated water. Some locations may be contaminated to an extent that makes diving unsafe regardless of the exposure protection available. In those locations, it is the Divemaster's responsibility to ensure that divers do not enter the water, and operations must be performed using remotely operated vehicles (ROV), sonar, remote sampling equipment (e.g., Ponar dredge, Kemmerer bottle, etc.), or other non-diving methods to fulfill the project objectives.

The level of decontamination can range from simply rinsing the diver with clean water to having the diver pass through a formal decontamination corridor. The major variables to consider when decontaminating dive equipment include the nature of the surface (smooth surfaces are easier to clean than porous surfaces); and the type and concentrations of contaminants encountered.

In some situations, where the diver's dry suit will likely suffer gross contamination (oil spills) that may not be possible to clean, the diver should wear coveralls, Tyvek or similar PPE over the dry suit. The coveralls must be modified to not interfere with the proper operation of the dry suit (e.g., holes have to be cut for the suit inflator and exhaust valves). While the coveralls will provide only minimal protection to the dry suit, it may be possible to complete a multi-day dive operation before discarding any dive equipment that can't be sufficiently decontaminated. Coveralls may also be worn when diving near potentially sharp or jagged edges to prevent tearing the dry suit. Any PPE materials which become visually contaminated should be removed and replaced between dives.

5.1.1 Personnel Requirements

Each member of the decontamination team shall have the experience or training necessary (e.g., EPA Diver Training, Occupational Safety and Health Administration 40 hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Training [OSHA 40hr HAZWOPER]) to perform the tasks assigned to them in a safe and efficient manner. This experience and training shall include the use of tools and equipment required for efficient and effective decontamination. Each member of the decontamination team shall also have training in emergency procedures (first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR]). Each decontamination team member shall only be assigned tasks in accordance with that person's training and experience.

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5.1.2 Safety Considerations

The duration of the decontamination process is an important consideration during any dive operation. Having the diver remain encapsulated to walk through a decontamination corridor is tiring and stressful. During cold weather, the diver may risk hypothermia walking through a decontamination line. During warm weather the diver may risk hyperthermia the longer he or she is in the dry suit on the surface (particularly if dressed for cold water diving). Additionally, the surface support/decontamination personnel will be exposed to the weather. It is important to get the diver through the decontamination process and out of the dry suit as quickly as possible (NOAA 2001).

There is a high likelihood that the surface support/decontamination personnel will be splashed by surface water, sediment and/or by the decontamination solutions. Surface personnel should wear impermeable, disposable outerwear and face shields or similar PPE-as specified in the HASP. Care must be taken when rinsing contaminated sediment from the diver in windy conditions.

Choice of PPE for surface support personnel is driven by both the expected site contaminants and by the choice of decontamination solution. Though certain decontamination solutions don't require any special PPE (e.g., soap), the potential for being splashed by site sediment or water mandates proper PPE. Conversely, some decontamination solutions (e.g., bleach) mandate proper PPE regardless of the site contamination (see Attachment 1). The appropriate PPE should be defined in the site-specific Dive Plan.

When assisting the diver donning clean dive gear, the tender needs no PPE. However, as successive divers reuse the same equipment (e.g., weight harness, buoyancy compensation device [BCD], emergency gas supply [EGS] harness, fins), the tender must wear appropriate PPE when handling the equipment that has not been fully decontaminated.

In order to prevent cross-contamination, when the same tender that assisted a contaminated diver from the water is required to assist the next diver into clean gear, the tender must first change out of his/her potentially contaminated PPE (see Section 5.6).

In order to expedite the decontamination process, it is often more efficient to scrub the diver down with a strong solution of antimicrobial soap to wash the biological agents off quickly, without concern about killing them. That way the diver's dry suit can be adequately cleaned and quickly removed, while all other equipment (weight harness, BCD, etc.) can be soaked in a strong soap solution, bleach, or other appropriate decontamination solution for a period of time sufficient to kill any pathogens adhering to the nylon webbing or fabric.

Some decontamination situations may call for covering surrounding areas with plastic sheeting in order

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to contain contaminants or decontamination solutions. Care must be taken that the sheeting is properly anchored and does not pose a slip, trip and fall hazard to either the diver or the support personnel. Additionally, once the plastic is wet and/or soapy, it may become more slippery. An appropriate number of support personnel are required to steady the diver to prevent accidents.

5.2 Decontamination Solutions

The major considerations when choosing a decontamination solution are; 1) effectiveness against the expected site contaminants; 2) compatibility with dry suit materials and other equipment; 3) safety of exposure to both the diver and the tenders; 4) availability and cost; 5) use of biodegradable decontamination solutions or containment and disposal of used non-biodegradable solutions. Selection of decontamination solutions is at the discretion of the Divemaster, with concurrence of the UDO and the Health and Safety Officer. Decontamination solutions and procedures should be described in the Dive Plan prior to going on-site.

There are numerous decontamination solutions to choose from. Unfortunately, some of the most effective decontamination solutions are very aggressive, corrosive and toxic (LBL 2006). Attachment 1, *DIVER DECONTAMINATION SOLUTIONS* lists some decontamination solutions along with their general effectiveness against biological and chemical contaminants and their safety/compatibility for use on divers and dive equipment.

5.3 Decontamination Stages

The following sections list decontamination steps, some of which may be minimized, combined or omitted at the Divemaster's discretion, based on the contaminants and situation. These steps must be performed in the most efficient, effective manner possible to avoid undue stress on the diver. The planned decontamination stages should be included in the Dive Plan.

5.3.1 Exclusion Zone

5.3.1.1 Equipment Drop

As the diver exits the water, all non-life support equipment (e.g., tools, cameras, dive lights) should be dropped in the EZ for later use or decontamination. The equipment should be taken by the tender and set aside so that it is out of the way, but available for the next diver or staged for decontamination. If available space allows, the equipment should be put in a container to prevent the spread of contamination. If the equipment is going to be immediately used by the next diver, it does not need more than gross decontamination until dive operations are completed for the day. The potentially contaminated equipment must remain in the EZ and should only be handled by the tender and the divers. The tender must wear appropriate PPE for the contaminant and situation (e.g., chemically/water resistive suit, rubber boots/booties, face shield/eye protection, gloves).

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5.3.1.2 Samples and Sampling Equipment

While the samples may be the reason for the dive operation, the safety and well-being of the diver is the tender's primary responsibility. Samples collected by the diver should be grossly decontaminated and encapsulated (e.g. placed inside resealable plastic bags) or placed into a sample cooler prior to being transferred from the EZ. Samples and sample containers are to be considered contaminated and should only be handled by personnel wearing appropriate PPE.

The diver should hand sampling equipment to the tender who should either set the equipment down in a designated area in the EZ or pass the equipment on to other personnel for decontamination or disposal. Sampling equipment has been in direct contact with the contaminated media being sampled and should only be handled by personnel wearing appropriate PPE. After the diver has completed the decontamination process, the sampling equipment can be decontaminated as specified in the field sampling plan.

5.3.1.3 Gross Decontamination

While still in the EZ, the diver should be grossly decontaminated to remove visible contamination including sediment, algae, plant life, etc. The tender may be responsible for gross decontamination. However, if the primary tender is required to move away from the diver, a second tender may be required to stay with the diver to ensure that the diver does not slip, trip or fall. If available, a hose with a spray nozzle may be used to rinse the diver with potable water, or material may be removed from the diver by hand.

If a hose is used to spray the diver, it should not be a high-pressure hose (e.g., a pressure washer). The tender should also take care not to direct the spray toward the seals around the diver's mask/helmet or gloves, to minimize the chance of forcing contaminants into the diver's suit. When spraying near the diver's mask/helmet, the tender should adjust to a gentle spray from the diver's face toward the back of his or her head (so the water goes over the seal instead of under it). When spraying the diver's hands, the spray should be directed from the diver's hand toward the elbow (so the water is not forced into the diver's gloves). The tender should take extra care to rinse out sediment or contaminants from wrinkles in the diver's suit and the areas around the glove cuffs and mask/helmet seals. Spraying should be systematic, starting at the head and working downward to the feet.

5.3.2 Contaminant Reduction Zone

Upon leaving the Exclusion Zone, the diver will enter the Contaminant Reduction Zone. In this zone, the diver will be thoroughly decontaminated. If the dive operation is land-based all wash water should be



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captured in a basin for proper disposal as specified in the site-specific HASP.

5.3.2.1 Diver Decontamination

One suitably dressed person is required to perform decontamination. However, using two or more people ensures that decontamination is quick and that at no time will the diver be left unattended. If necessary, the tender from the gross decontamination step should remain on the edge of the Exclusion Zone to minimize contamination of the Contaminant Reduction Zone.

The diver should be scrubbed with an appropriate decontamination solution, taking extra care around the diver's mask/helmet and gloves. Tenders should start at the diver's head and work down to the diver's feet. Soft-bristled brushes and/or sponges should be used to scrub the diver, since stiff-bristled brushes and harsh scrubbing may damage the dry suit. A strong solution of antibacterial soap does not require any contact time beyond that required to scrub the diver. The soap should be rinsed off while it is still wet to more effectively carry away any biological agents.

Typically a surfactant based decontamination fluid is suitable in removing most biological agents from the dive equipment. If there is a need not only to remove the biological agents from the equipment, but additionally kill these organisms a decontamination solution such as Betadine, bleach, or DF-200 (see Attachment 1) may also be necessary. These solutions require contact time with the biological agents in order to work properly. Contact time is defined as the length of time that the wet decontamination solution is on the diver's suit and/or equipment. The minimum effective contact time should be determined in advance to ensure appropriate treatment in the shortest amount of time to reduce stress on the diver. Some solutions (e.g., Betadine and bleach) lose effectiveness when they dry up, and may have to be reapplied. This becomes difficult on hot or windy days when the diver's suit tends to dry quickly.

If a decontamination solution other than soap is used, it should be washed away with a soapy water scrub to ensure that the decontamination solution is completely removed from the diver. The soap will also act as a secondary decontamination solution.

After the diver has been scrubbed with decontamination solution, a final rinse with potable water is required. This step may be performed in a decontamination shower, with a hose, a Hudson sprayer, or using buckets. At no time should the diver move backward in the

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decontamination line.

During small boat operations, the contaminant reduction area will usually be on the dive platform or swim ladder. In these instances, all wash water will go directly overboard into the EZ. If extensive decontamination must be performed or decontamination solutions can't be released into the environment (e.g., TSP, quats) the decontamination would need to occur on shore or on a larger vessel with a designated decontamination area.

For small boat operations, the entire decontamination process may take place with the diver standing on the dive platform or on the swim ladder (if conditions permit). In addition to proper PPE, Tenders should wear a personnel floatation device (PFD). At no time should Tenders put themselves at risk by leaning overboard attempting to decontaminate a diver. If the Tender cannot safely accomplish the decontamination with the diver on a ladder, it is the Divemaster's responsibility to find an alternative location (e.g. aboard the vessel, on a second vessel, or on the shore). For the purpose of this SOP, the area of the boat in which the diver is being decontaminated will become the Contaminant Reduction Zone after the diver has been grossly decontaminated.

5.3.2.2 Mask/Helmet/BCD/Emergency Gas Supply Removal

This step is required after every contaminated water dive. Up to the point where the decontamination solution is rinsed off, the diver has remained completely encapsulated. After the diver has been scrubbed, the BCD or EGS harness can be removed without removing the mask/helmet. The BCD/EGS can be set safely on a table or bench so that the mask/helmet does not have to be removed and the weight harness can be removed (the harness can either be decontaminated or kept in service for the next diver). If necessary, a second tender should hold the BCD/EGS while the first tender scrubs the area of the dry suit that had been covered by the other equipment. At this point, all contaminants should have been removed from the diver or neutralized.

Care should be taken when removing the diver's mask/helmet and dry suit. At this stage, a tender other than the one who scrubbed the diver should take over if needed. If a second tender is not available, the primary tender should change into fresh PPE (at a minimum the tender should don fresh gloves) before continuing to avoid recontamination of the diver.

When removing either the helmet or the mask, the area of the seal is critical. With the full-face mask, the area where the mask sits on the latex face seal of the dry suit hood will retain water. This water may still contain contaminants from the dive. Therefore, as soon as the mask has been removed, a paper towel should be used to wipe up the extra moisture to keep it from

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dripping into the diver's face. This should be followed immediately by a disinfectant wipe (e.g., alcohol wipes).

When wearing a helmet, the seal is around the diver's neck and the water left in the seam is less likely to drip onto the diver. However, this area should be wiped and disinfected immediately.

During this stage, the tender should assist the diver with removing all gear except the dry suit and dry gloves. The life support equipment (BCD/EGS) should be set aside for more thorough decontamination or kept in service for the next diver.

5.3.2.3 Dry Glove and Dry Suit Removal

Dry suit outer gloves should be removed first by the tender by pulling the gauntlet over the diver's hand so the glove is inside-out. The inner gloves should be left on the diver and removed as the final stage of the decontamination process.

The tender should wipe the area of the zipper with paper towels and unzip the dry suit, and assist the diver with removing it. It is important that the tender only touch the outside of the suit, to prevent possible contamination of the inside of the suit.

The diver, with assistance from the tender, should take off the hood and pull their head through the neck seal. Once the suit has been pulled off of the divers head and arms, the diver should stand to pull the suit down past his or her waist and then sit on a clean seat (not the same one that had contact with the dry suit) facing the Contaminant Reduction Zone so the tender can assist pulling the dry suit off of the diver's legs and feet. Though the suit should be clean, it should be pulled off inside-out to reduce the chances the diver will contact the outside of the suit. The last apparel that should be removed from the diver are the inner gloves. The diver should then rotate on the seat to put his or her feet down on the side of the seat facing the Support Zone.

If the diver or tender notices a wet spot (as opposed to obvious sweat marks) on the diver's undergarments after removal of the suit, it is possible that the suit leaked. If the suit leaks in contaminated water, the inside of the suit must be decontaminated as well. The undergarments must be washed or discarded and the diver should shower as soon as possible. The suit must also be repaired before it can be put back in service.

While the dry suit should be clean at this point, the areas that had been covered by the full-face mask straps and by the BCD/harness during decontamination should be gently scrubbed with

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the same decontamination solution used earlier. The dry suit can be moved to the Support Zone or reused after decontamination has been completed.

5.3.3 Support Zone

5.3.3.1 Hand and Face Wash/Shower

Once the dry suit has been removed, the diver has completed contaminant reduction, and can enter the Support Zone, where resources should be available for the diver to wash his or her hands and face. If available, a full shower with soap is preferred.

5.3.3.2 Observation Period/ Recovery

The diver should remain in the Support Zone for thirty minutes for observation. During this time, the diver should be given water or other non-caffeinated drinks and allowed to rest in a comfortable area. During the warmer months, a tent or other shaded area should be used if available. During colder weather, a sheltered area, preferably indoors should be used if available.

5.4 Emergency Decontamination

In the case of an emergency during a dive or during any stage of the decontamination process, an emergency decontamination procedure should be used. The Divemaster will determine the extent of decontamination required based on the level and type of contamination encountered versus the risk involved in delaying medical treatment. Efforts should be made to minimize exposure of the diver and emergency personnel to residual contamination. Information on the type and level of contamination associated with the site must be forwarded to the attending medical personnel so they may take appropriate precautions to protect themselves and others from exposure.

5.5 Tender Decontamination

Before leaving the Contaminant Reduction Zone, the tender must remove all potentially contaminated PPE. At the edge of the Contaminant Reduction Zone and the Support Zone, the exposure suit (e.g., Tyvek suit, etc.) should be pulled off inside out, taking care not to contaminate the tender's undergarments or skin. After the suit has been pulled down past the tender's waist, the tender should sit on a clean seat facing the Contaminant Reduction Zone and pull the suit off his or her legs. As each boot cover is pulled off inside out, the tender should turn and place the uncovered foot down on the side of the seat facing the Support Zone. Gloves should then be pulled off inside out and left in the Contaminant Reduction Zone. The tender should then wash his or her hands and face with soapy water. All PPE should be discarded with the other site-derived waste.

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5.6 Equipment Decontamination

5.6.1 Full-face Mask Cleaning Procedure

At the end of each day, the full-face mask should be completely decontaminated following the procedure recommended by the manufacturer. For AGA masks the following procedure should be utilized:

- The AGA mask should be immersed in warm potable water and cleaned to remove any gross contamination and debris from the mask.
- The front cover assembly (or communications unit) should be removed by unscrewing the two thumb screws. The regulator (breathing valve) should be removed from the mask body by rotating one half turn clockwise and pulling outward. Dismantle the breathing valve by unscrewing the locking ring to remove the positive pressure unit. Only turn the locking ring, since turning the positive pressure unit may damage the o-ring used to seal the unit to the body of the breathing valve. The positive pressure unit assembly should be disassembled by removing the diaphragm assembly and separating the components (diaphragm assembly, spring and guide disk, and sealing disk). Do not disassemble the diaphragm assembly. Check for debris and damage to the diaphragm.
- Immerse all parts (with the exception of the communications unit) in a mild cleaning/disinfecting solution. Allow at least ten minutes contact time, remove and rinse all parts thoroughly with potable water. Place all parts on a clean towel and allow to air dry.
- After all parts have dried, check all parts for visible damage, degradation or contamination. Lubricate the o-rings and the sealing disk shaft with oxygen-compatible silicone grease. Reassemble the breathing valve and attach it to the AGA mask. The AGA mask function should be tested prior to storage. After testing function, screw the dust cap onto the hose connection, and place the mask into a large plastic bag for storage.

5.6.2 Helmet Cleaning Procedure

At the end of each day, the diving helmet should be completely decontaminated following the procedure recommended by the manufacturer and as generally outlined below.

- The helmet should be immersed in warm potable water and cleaned to remove any remaining gross contamination and debris on the external surfaces helmet.

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- The regulator/diaphragm should be taken apart, cleaned and decontaminated as specified in the manufacturer's procedures.
- If the helmet is shared between divers liners and nose cups should be replaced or decontaminated as necessary.
- The helmet function should be tested prior to storage or reuse.

5.6.3 Dry Suit

The dry suit should be inspected and additional decontamination and/or repairs should be performed as needed. The suit should be inspected carefully for tears, abrasions, holes or areas where chemical damage may have occurred. Brittleness, stickiness, color changes, or swollen materials could indicate significant chemical damage. Any suit exhibiting these conditions should be removed from service and returned to the manufacturer for evaluation and/or repair..

5.6.4 Other Equipment

As practical, all other equipment (BCDs, weight harnesses, EGS harnesses, fins, knives, tools, etc.) should be decontaminated based on the contaminant.

- Gross contamination should be removed by rinsing or brushing with potable water. Greasy contamination should be scrubbed with a degreasing solution.
- Hard-surfaced equipment (e.g., knives, tools) generally doesn't require soaking, but porous-surfaced equipment (e.g., nylon webbing harnesses, BCDs) should be soaked in an appropriate decontamination solution for a minimum of 10 minutes. It should then be scrubbed, rinsed with potable water, and examined. The procedure should be repeated until the equipment is clean. The equipment should also be examined for damage. Any equipment showing signs of damage should be removed and evaluated before being reused. Of particular importance is equipment used for life support or diver safety. This includes BCD bladders, harness webbing, etc.
- Some equipment may require disassembly in order to be effectively decontaminated (e.g., BCD). Refer to manufacturer's instruction for the disassembly, cleaning and reassembly.

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FIGURE 1. Decontamination Stages

Area	Procedures	Comments
Exclusion Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit water • Equipment Drop • Gross Decontamination 	Re-used Equipment Staging
Contamination Reduction Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough Decontamination with Appropriate Decontamination Solution(s) • Potable Water Rinse Using Hose or Decontamination Shower • Mask/Helmet Removal • Dry Suit Removal 	Equipment Decontamination Site Derived Waste Storage
Support Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand/Face Wash • Observation and Recovery • Shower 	Surface Support Personnel

NOTES:

1. Decontamination stages must be determined on a site-specific basis and must be specified in the site-specific Dive Plan and HASP.
2. The Control Points indicate that access to each of the decontamination zones is to be controlled to a single entry point.
3. Only divers and tender/decontamination personnel in appropriate PPE are allowed in the Exclusion Zone and Contaminant Reduction Zone.
4. At no time should the diver move backward in the decontamination process.

ATTACHMENT 1
Diver Decontamination Solutions

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DIVER DECONTAMINATION SOLUTIONS



This attachment of decontamination solutions is not all-inclusive, and other suitable decontamination solutions may be used by the Divemasters with concurrence of the UDO and the Health and Safety Officer. This list is subject to change without notice as new products come to market or further testing is conducted.

The major considerations when choosing a decontamination solution are; 1) effectiveness against the expected site contaminants; 2) compatibility with dry suit materials and other equipment; 3) safety of exposure to both the diver and the tenders; 4) availability and cost; 5) use of biodegradable decontamination solutions or containment and disposal of used non-biodegradable solutions. Decontamination solutions and procedures should be described in the HASP prior to going on-site.

There are numerous decontamination solutions to choose from. Unfortunately, many of the most effective decontamination solutions are very aggressive, corrosive and toxic (LBL 2006). Many disinfectants and sterilants are well suited to cleaning hospital surfaces and equipment, but are not safe to use on divers or some dive equipment. The objective of decontaminating the diver is to remove the contamination from the diver's suit so that the suit can be safely removed. There is no necessity to use solutions that are potentially dangerous to the diver or the equipment when other less dangerous solutions will yield satisfactory results. Removing the contaminants from the diver is more important than neutralizing chemical contaminants or killing biological contaminants. Killing biological contaminants on the divers suit/equipment will usually not be the goal of the initial stage of the decontamination process (while the diver is still dressed), due to the wet contact time required to achieve this. A secondary definitive decontamination of dry suits and equipment may be required after the dry suit/equipment has been removed. Since some of the contaminants at a site may be unknown, it is necessary to use a decontamination solution that is effective for a variety of contaminants (EPA 1985).

Decontamination solutions prepared from concentrated products (e.g., soap or bleach) should be diluted with potable water and not site water, since site water may negatively impact the final strength of the prepared decontamination solution.

It is recommended that prior to the start of site activities the contaminants of concern should be identified and care should be given to select the most appropriate decontamination solution(s). If contaminants are anticipated but not well documented a very conservative approach should be used in selecting the most effective broad based decontamination solution(s). Antimicrobial soap is generally a very effective decontamination solution since it will kill some biological contaminants and is also a surfactant which will remove most contaminants from the diver's suit. When the diver's suit is contaminated with oil and/or grease a decontamination solution with degreasing properties such as Simple Green may be effective as a single decontamination solution or in conjunction with other decontamination solutions. Although an iodine based decontamination solution such as Betadine or alcohol may not be useful as a primary decontamination solution, it may be most effective for use decontaminating various pieces of dive equipment such full face masks (i.e., AGA masks). Harsher or more aggressive decontamination solutions such as trisodium phosphate (TSP) and quaternary-ammonium compounds (quats) may not be an ideal primary decontamination solution, but may be useful in performing a secondary definitive decontamination on certain equipment after it has been removed from the diver.

Certain commercially available decontamination solutions such as DF200 have been tested and shown to be effective on specific biological and chemical contaminants. Although this solution is more expensive than many of the other decontamination solutions listed below, when those contaminants are present DF200 would likely be the most reliable decontamination solution available.

Water

The most important decontamination solution is potable water. A plentiful supply of potable water, preferably from a low-pressure hose hooked up to a municipal water supply or a large water tank is the first and last step of all decontamination procedures. If a large tank is not available, smaller containers (e.g., 5-gallon buckets, collapsible plastic containers, Hudson sprayers) of potable water should be available. Water from a hose should not be under pressure any higher than typical municipal water pressure (40 to 70 pounds per square inch). High pressure hoses (e.g., pressure washers) may damage the diver's suit or force contaminants into seams or contaminate nearby surface support personnel. In some instances a thorough rinse with potable water is all the decontamination the diver needs (e.g., after diving in salt water).

Commercial Soaps/Cleaning Solutions

A strong solution of soap/cleaning solutions (dish soap typically has more surfactant than hand soap) is the next most commonly used decontamination solution. Commercial soaps/cleaning solutions are readily available and produced by numerous companies using different various synthetic and/or natural active ingredients. When selecting a soap/cleaning solution the following properties should be considered:

- 1) Surfactant Effectiveness – The greater the surfactant effectiveness the easier the solution will remove contaminants and oil/grease during the decontamination process. A soap's surfactant action will remove most organic contamination, and scrubbing with soapy water will remove sediment-associated inorganics (e.g., metals). Soap will also wash away biological contaminants (when biological contaminants are washed off, they are not killed, but their physical remove can result in an effective decontamination). When decontaminating oils and grease, the surfactants effectiveness is usually a key consideration when selecting an appropriate decontamination solution.
- 2) Antimicrobial Properties – Some soap/cleaning solutions include antimicrobial additives. The active ingredient used in most antimicrobial soaps is triclosan. Triclosan works, even at very low concentrations, by blocking enoyl-acyl carrier-protein reductase (ENR), preventing bacteria and fungi from producing fatty acids needed for cell membranes and other vital functions (Senese 2005). Humans don't have the ENR enzyme, and so triclosan is harmless enough for use in a wide variety of consumer goods including cosmetics and toothpaste (Senese 2005). Because of its effectiveness and safety, antimicrobial dish soap is often the solution of choice for decontaminating patients arriving at hospital emergency rooms (USVA 2006; Jagminas 2006). In hand-washing experiments, antimicrobial soap was shown to be more effective at removing biological agents than soap with no antimicrobial additive (CDC 2002).
- 3) Biodegradability - Many biodegradable products are readily available. When decontamination solutions may be released into the environment during the decontamination process a biodegradable product should be used. When the decontamination solutions are controlled and contained, this criterion is of less importance. The products biodegradability is usually specified on the products label or the associated Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

- 4) Safety – When selecting an appropriate soap/cleaning solution the safety to the all personnel and equipment should be considered. To access the safety of a solution Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) should be consulted. When possible, non-hazardous solutions with a HMIS health rating of 1 or less should be utilized. The MSDS will identify any specific health hazards (eye, skin, ingestion, and inhalation) and the appropriate protective equipment should be used if needed. The MSDS will also list any applicable first aid measures, accidental release measures, handling and storage requirements, exposure controls, and the solutions stability and reactivity (which is important when using multiple decontamination solutions and/or compatibility with dive equipment materials).

Biodegradable antimicrobial soap is a useful decontamination solution because it has wide applicability, ready availability, it is safe for use on both the diver and the diver's suit, and it requires no special PPE or disposal. The leftover soap solution can be used to clean the decontamination zone, the boat or other equipment.

Numerous other safe, effective and biodegradable decontamination soap/cleaning solutions (with or without antimicrobial agents) are available and should be considered based on decontamination requirements. These products include Simple Green® All-Purpose Cleaner (general all purpose cleaner/degreaser), Citrus Klean (natural citrus based cleaner/degreaser), BioSol (Organic solvent degreaser), ZEP Big Orange (natural citrus based cleaner/degreaser), ZEP Acclaim (liquid hand soap), Orange Blossom (natural citrus based cleaner/degreaser) and Citrus Magic (natural citrus based cleaner/degreaser). These products contain various natural and synthetic active ingredients including citrus terpenes [d-Limonene], sodium silicate/metasilicate, linear alcohol ethoxylate, sodium iminodisuccinate, monoethanolamine, dipropylene glycol methyl ether, dipropylene glycol monomethyl, and sodium dodecylbenzene sulfonate.

Bleach

Sodium hypochlorite, in the form of chlorine bleach, is a biocide that is readily available in most supermarkets. Household bleach is approximately 6% sodium hypochlorite (Clorox 2005). A 5% solution of bleach (approximately six ounces mixed into a gallon of water) will kill most bacteria, fungi and viruses on a hard, non-porous surface after a five minute contact time (Clorox 2006). In order to overcome the consumption of free chlorine by organic matter in the site water, a 10% solution of bleach (12 ounces in a gallon of water) should be used for diver decontamination. Contact time, in this case, is defined as the length of time the wet solution is in contact with the surface to be cleaned. Contact time should be adjusted to at least ten minutes to adjust for the differences between dive equipment and hard surfaces. It is difficult to keep the diver wet for the entire contact time so bleach is not the best choice to decontaminate the diver's suit. However, it is quite simple and effective to soak the diver's fins, harness, BCD, etc. Care must be taken when using bleach as a decontamination solution, since it will burn eyes and mucous membranes in a 10% solution. Bleach straight from the bottle can burn unprotected skin and can damage clothes and dive equipment. Proper PPE (e.g., disposable rain suits, face shield, surgical gloves) is mandatory when using bleach as a decontamination solution.

Calcium hypochlorite is also used as a biocide, and it is readily available in powder form (e.g., swimming pool chlorine granules). A 10% calcium hypochlorite solution has greater available chlorine than a sodium hypochlorite solution. However, the powder is not readily soluble in water, and should be mixed thoroughly in warm, preferably soft to moderately hard water prior to use. This makes it difficult to achieve a desired concentration. Calcium hypochlorite granules can burn unprotected skin and can damage clothes and dive equipment. The powder also poses an inhalation risk (Arch Chemicals 2002). Proper PPE (e.g., disposable rain suits, face shield, respirator mask, surgical gloves) is mandatory when using calcium hypochlorite as a decontamination solution.

Betadine

Betadine is a brand name for a 10% povidone-iodine solution commonly used in hospitals to disinfect wounds and prepare skin for surgery. Undiluted Betadine will kill most pathogens after ten minutes of contact time. Contact time, in this case, is defined as the length of time the wet solution is in contact with the surface to be cleaned. The diver must effectively be kept wet with undiluted Betadine for the entire contact time to prevent the solution on the suit from drying. Iodophors such as Betadine use povidone to slow the release of iodine, while using surfactants to increase penetration (Abedon 2003). Since the solution is reddish-brown, it may be easy to see if any areas of the diver's suit have been missed. Care must be taken when using Betadine as a decontamination solution since prolonged contact of large skin areas can lead to excessive absorption of iodine (Purdue 2005). Betadine will also burn eyes and mucous membranes, and will stain clothing, dive equipment, and boats. Proper PPE (e.g., disposable rain suits, face shield/eye protection, gloves) is mandatory when using Betadine, and it is recommended that all surrounding surfaces be covered with disposable plastic sheeting to prevent permanent staining.

Pre-mixed iodine based solutions with a cleaning agent such as Multi-Wash™ Mini have been tested and are commercially available. These types of solutions may not be ideal for primary diver decontamination but are effective in cleaning and disinfecting certain types of dive gear such as full-face masks (Scott Health and Safety 2009).

Quaternary-Ammonium Compounds

Many commercial and household cleaners are based on quaternary-ammonium compounds (quats). These products (e.g., Zepamine A) are designed primarily for deodorizing and sanitizing general household areas, kitchens, cafeterias, food processing equipment/utensils. Additional uses include algae control in pools and cooling systems (Zep 2006). Quats are highly toxic to fish and aquatic plants, and care should be taken not to allow decontamination liquids to enter any body of surface water. If quats are mixed with chlorine bleach, the exothermic reaction is potentially explosive and the resultant chlorine gas may be hazardous. Quats are also corrosive to skin and eyes, and proper PPE and disposal of wash fluid is required.

TSP

TSP is an acronym for tri-sodium phosphate, a strong cleaner/degreaser. However, in the 1970s use of phosphate-containing products was limited. Some products on the market today that are sold as TSP may contain other ingredients and can be less than half TSP (Savogran 2001a). Other products sold as TSP or TSP-substitutes may contain no phosphate and may be acutely corrosive to skin and eyes (Red Devil 2006, Savogran 2001b). TSP products are commonly used to prepare surfaces for painting, remove mildew from home siding, and remove stains from patios or driveways. While TSP is a common household cleaner, it is not appropriate for some materials. TSP will stain metals and can etch glass and fiberglass. When using TSP solutions, care should be taken to cover the surrounding area with plastic sheeting and the decontamination liquids should not be allowed to enter any body of surface water. Proper PPE and disposal of wash fluid is mandatory when using TSP products.

Alcohol

Isopropyl alcohol (IPA) is also a good biocide (NIH 2006), and while it is not appropriate for decontaminating the diver's entire suit and/or equipment, it is ideal for wiping down the areas under the seals of the diver's AGA mask (the latex seal around the diver's face where the mask meets the dry suit), or around the area where the diver's helmet mates to the dry suit. IPA is readily available in supermarkets as a 70% IPA/30% water solution, or as individually packaged wipes. Contact time is immediate. Care should be taken not to get IPA on the diver's face or in the diver's eyes. The readily available 70% IPA solution should not be diluted further before use. Tenders should wear at least eye protection and gloves when working with IPA.

DF200

There have been several recently developed commercial decontamination solutions that have been demonstrated to be effective in neutralizing chemical and biological warfare (CBW) agents. DF-200 is one of these products that have been shown to be very effective against CBW agents while being environmentally safe, work on a wide range of material surfaces and need contact times ranging from about 1 to 30 minutes depending on the organism (DUI 2009).

EasyDECON™ DF200 by Intelagard, a DF200 based decontamination solution distributed by Diving Unlimited International (DUI), was developed as a decontamination solution for use with CBW agents, but it has also been shown to be effective with a select number of toxic industrial chemicals (i.e., organophosphates, chlorine, ammonia, hydrogen cyanide and malathion) and other biological pathogens (*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Pfiesteria*, *Giardia*, fungus and molds) (DUI 2009). Although DF200 will neutralize biological contaminants and select chemicals (i.e., organophosphates) it will also act as a surfactant, removing but not neutralizing other chemicals, such as oil/metals etc. Although DF200 may be most effective in some decontamination procedures, unlike many of the other solutions listed, it is not readily available in the field and would be one of the most expensive decontamination solutions evaluated.

Other Decontamination Agents

For crude oil/grease on a dry suit or other dive equipment, a variety of cleaning solutions or wipes impregnated with cleaning agents/degreasers are available. For disinfecting the area under a diver's AGA mask seal or where the helmet mates with the dry suit a variety of individually sealed wipes are readily available (e.g., Saniwipes, benzalkonium chloride wipes, etc.). For chemical and biological agents from terrorism-related incidents, the National Institute of Justice lists other decontamination solutions that may be investigated for suitability (NIJ 2001). Before using any cleaning solvent, its safety for skin contact and compatibility with dry suit and equipment materials must be assessed.

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