



TOPSIDE

NOAA Diving Program Newsletter, January 2010

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FY 2010 Training Schedule

Jan 11 – 29, 2010
Working Diver
Jan 25 – 29, 2010
Divemaster
Key West, FL

Jan 12 – 29, 2010
MPIC**
Norfolk, VA

April 2010*
Refresher Class
Seattle, WA

May 3 – 21, 2010
Working Diver
Seattle, WA

May 17 – 21 2010
Divemaster
Seattle, WA

Aug 9 – 20 2010 (tentative)
Physicians Course
Seattle, WA

Aug 2010*
Refresher
Seattle, WA

Sep 13 – Oct 1, 2010
Working Diver
Seattle, WA

Sept 27 – Oct 1 2010
Divemaster
Seattle, WA

IT'S ALL

IN THE TECHNIQUE



UDS Roger Mays

New diver training techniques were used during the annual skills refresher training at CCFHR, Beaufort NC. To improve diver buoyancy control two drills were utilized. One drill required divers to swim through obstacles (suspended 1m²quadrat), the second required divers to maintain neutral buoyancy while swimming and balancing a golf ball and ping pong ball on spoons. Once individual drill proficiency was demonstrated, divers were encouraged to swim through obstacles while completing the spoon drill (Photo 1).

As a test of diver awareness, these drills and lift bag tasks were used in combination with a sham diver emergency. Task loading is common on scientific dives, by task loading divers with drills a more realistic emergency scenario was created; diver awareness beyond their buddy and task was effectively tested and resulted in an in-depth discussion following the rescue drill.

~ Christine Addison CCFHR, Beaufort

A REMINDER FROM THE NOAA DIVING SAFETY OFFICER -

Annual Unit Diving Inspection Checklists are due this month. Annual inspections by units, sub-units and ships are required by the NOAA Diving Program. The intent of the inspection is to identify and address deficiencies. The inspection checklist provides guidelines for the requirements and condition of dive units/lockers to ensure unit operational readiness and safety. The **NOAA Diving Program Unit Diving Inspection Checklist** can be found on the NDC website at <http://www.ndc.noaa.gov>. Upon completion, Units should submit their inspection checklists to their LODO/ODO's for review. LODO's should then forward them to NDSO Steve Urick at the NOAA Diving Center. **The deadline for submission of the Unit Diving Inspection Checklist to NDC is January 31.**

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DO NOT EXCHANGE SEP OXYGEN CYLINDERS, GET THEM REFILLED.

NDC specifically purchases new steel cylinders with lever handles as we build SEP oxygen kits. Painted steel generally holds up better to the environmental conditions at sea, provided the O2 kits are kept dry and the foam is dry before the kit is stored. The steel cylinders NDC purchases can be overfilled by 10% when "+" tested during hydro, giving each O2 kit an additional 3 ft3. Steel cylinders can go 10 years between hydro's when "*" tested. NDC is trying to lessen the work required by ships personnel and dive lockers to maintain their equipment.

People in a hurry have mistakenly exchanged instead of refilling SEP specially chosen oxygen cylinders that had new valves and, more importantly, a known history of service. When you exchange SEP cylinders, instead of getting them refilled, there are several possible outcomes, all of them bad.

- Exchanged cylinders may not have a new hydro test (the full 5 years or the full 10 years for steels with *), therefore you may find that next year you may be sending cylinders out for hydro.
- The hydro dates may be staggered; one goes out in 2 years, the other in 4 years. You just multiplied your work load by a factor of ~ 4.
- If the cylinders are not "+" tested, they can only be filled to working pressure giving you 3 ft3 less than the bottles NDC originally shipped out.
- You may be given non painted aluminum cylinders that are more susceptible to corrosion in saltwater environments.
- Your exchanged cylinder valves may be in less than acceptable condition.
- The burst discs in the exchanged cylinder valves may be corroded or weakened by unknown filling practices or excessive filling cycles.
- The gasket seating surface on the exchanged valves may be damaged.
- The exchanged valves may require a wrench to open them.
- The exchanged cylinders may be of different heights causing damage to SEP dual yoke manifolds.
- The history of the exchanged cylinders is unknown. After the last hydro they may have been overfilled or exposed to excessive heat increasing the likelihood of catastrophic failure.

If you received an SEP oxygen kit in the last 3 years, it shouldn't require hydro testing until at least 2014, unless someone has exchanged the oxygen cylinders. Units are responsible for the upkeep and cost associated of SEP oxygen kits. The SEP O2 kit program saves NOAA time and money and provides quality controls; i.e., known histories of cylinders, valves and burst discs.

~ thanks, Bill Gordon

T.R.I. Air Testing

T.R.I. Air Test kits are being shipped to all units with compressors over the next couple weeks. It is important that you perform the tests as quickly as possible and return the kits to T.R.I. There should be no longer than a 30 day turnaround on these samples. If you cannot complete the test within 30 days, please contact T.R.I. directly to request an extension or make other arrangement. Beginning April 1, Unit/Ships that still have air testing kits will be billed directly from T.R.I. Air for \$750.00 per kit.