

October 1, 1984

NOAA DIVING SAFETY BULLETIN #84-1

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL NOAA DIVERS

FROM: J. Morgan Wells
NOAA Diving Coordinator

SUBJECT: High Pressure Air Systems

At the last meeting of the NOAA Diving Safety Board, the subject of High Pressure Air Systems was discussed in depth. A number of incidents, poor procedures, and unsafe situations were brought to the attention of the Safety Board. These circumstances have resulted in the overfilling of steel and aluminum scuba tanks, and have also resulted in various parts and fittings of filling systems being overpressurized.

These situations are dangerous and could be the cause of a serious or even fatal injury.

To reduce the possibilities of a tank rupturing or a system failure, the NOAA Diving Safety Board has designated the following policies for the use of HP Air Systems. Each policy is effective immediately!

1. The maximum working pressure for all HP systems within the NOAA Diving Program, and to be used by NOAA Divers, is 3200 psi.
2. If a permanent filling system is capable of delivering 2500 psi or higher, then equipment must be installed to ensure that steel tanks cannot be over filled. The equipment will consist of a 3-way valve and a pressure reduction regulator. The 3-way valve will be clearly marked to indicate the proper position for

filling steel or aluminum tanks. Any unit having a system that is capable of delivering 2500 psi or more should contact Richard Rutkowski, FTS 350-1223, or commercial (305) 361-4223 for information and direction on upgrading their systems to ensure compliance with this Safety Bulletin.

3. All existing HP systems that are capable of pressures of 2500 psi or more must be inspected by Richard Rutkowski, or his designee, to ensure that all fittings, valves, lines, hoses, filters, and storage flasks meet the specifications for the pressures being used within the system.

Any questions concerning the policies should be directed to Richard Rutkowski.