

FIRE FIGHTERS GUIDANCE NOTE # 6-23

ISSUE: SAFETY DURING SALVAGE AND OVERHAUL

Following extinguishment of fires, incomplete combustion will create a hazardous atmosphere. This places personnel involved in operations such as salvage and overhaul at risk of exposure to these contaminated atmospheres.

Salvage and overhaul present many risks to firefighters. The most common risk would be respiratory exposure. Toxic levels from the fire may be at their worst during the smoldering phase. Personal protective equipment, including respiratory protection, should be worn during this phase of firefighting.

There are many other risks that should be considered when performing these operations:

- Structural integrity of the building
- Exposure to carcinogens such as asbestos
- Sprains and strains
- Physical injuries
- Contamination through inhalation, ingestion, sharps, contact with contaminants, toxins, or potential carcinogens
- Gas and electricity should be isolated if at all possible
- Ventilation should be ongoing until salvage and overhaul activities have been completed
- Physical stress should be monitored and rehab should occur in accordance with GN # 6-12 Rehabilitation During Emergency Operations.

Monitoring of all risks should be maintained during all of these operations.