

**Dragon, Karen E. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)**

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**From:** bob.bell@sbcfire.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 23, 2011 2:23 PM  
**To:** NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)  
**Cc:** Chen, Jihong (Jane) (CDC/NIOSH/EID) (CTR)  
**Subject:** 147 - Reevaluation of the NIOSH policy on emergency escape support breathing system or buddy-breather device used with open-circuit self-contained breathing apparatus Comments

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Comments

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department is in support of the reevaluation of the existing NIOSH policy regarding the use of emergency escape support breathing equipment know as a "buddy breather", intended for use with open circuit self contained breathing apparatus.

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department along with many departments in the professional fire service recognize the increased aspect of safety the "buddy breather" provides while its personnel are working in the IDLH atmospheres that are encountered in the emergency response environment.

The safeguards of annual and periodic testing and maintenance of the "buddy breather" element of the SCBA and the continual training and education of the personnel using this tool daily across the country will make for responsible management of this assett.

The professional fire service recognizes the hazards associated with working in the IDLH environment. the profession applies mitigations before committing resources to the hazardous environment. The "buddy breather" is not implemented as a mitigation to committ personnel. The SCBA equiped with a buddy breather is another safety layer that has evoled through the professions commitment to its personnel.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.