



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health (NIOSH)
National Personal Protective
Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)
P.O. Box 18070
Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0070
Phone: 412-386-4000
Fax: 412-386-4051
April 4, 2006

NIOSH Respirator User Notice

SUBJECT: Rupture of Survivair Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Cylinder Valves

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has become aware of several incidents in which Survivair self-contained breathing apparatus cylinder valves have ruptured. Survivair has concluded that these failures were the result of overstress on the valve threads, generally caused by excessive torque being applied when the valve was re-attached to the cylinder after hydrostatic testing.

Although any valve can fail if overstressed, failures of this type reported to NIOSH to date have only involved certain Survivair cylinder valves. NIOSH recommends that all users of Survivair self-contained breathing apparatus take the following steps:

1. **Identify whether any of the affected cylinder valves are in your possession.** The affected valves bear the part numbers 920312, 920322, 921040, 921045, 921065, 961165, or 964833.
2. **Permanently remove from service all of the identified valves, unless you can positively verify that they have always been handled properly.** This includes checking, through documentation or other means, that every time the valve was removed from the cylinder it was reinstalled correctly. Documentation that a valve was installed by a qualified cylinder retester is not sufficient unless an actual installation torque value is recorded. Detailed recommendations can be found in the Survivair Safety Notice dated March 1, 2005. This notice is available from the web site <http://www.survivair.com/safety_notices.asp> under the title *Survivair SCBA Cylinder Valve*.
3. **Ensure that all persons performing maintenance functions are familiar with and strictly observe applicable requirements.** Survivair Technical Bulletins 127, 128, and 129 specify the method for properly assembling the valve to the cylinder and are available from the web site <<http://www.survivair.com/support/techBulletin.asp>>. Respirator users should ensure that anyone installing Survivair cylinder valves has a copy of these bulletins. This includes Department of Transportation-authorized cylinder retesters. Other maintenance tasks should only be performed by suitably qualified individuals.

To date, these valve failures have caused property damage but no serious injuries. However, if a valve were to rupture while in use, the wearer could be immediately injured or killed, and would at a minimum suffer a complete loss of respiratory protection.

Page 2 – Respirator User’s Notice – April 4, 2006

Anyone having questions regarding this issue should contact Survivair customer service at 1-800-821-7236 or the NIOSH Technology Evaluation Branch at 412-386-4000 or via electronic mail at npptl@cdc.gov

Sincerely yours,

William Hoffman
Acting Chief
Technology Evaluation Branch
National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory