



2013 SCBA TESTING DELAYS MAY IMPACT SOME FY 2012 AFG GRANTEES

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) employs the Army's Edgewood Chemical Biological Center's (ECBC) Test Laboratory to conduct the Chemical Warfare Agent (CWA) testing portion of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) testing. These services support the NIOSH respirator (SCBA) approvals providing CBRN protections.

On November 18, 2013, ECBC notified NIOSH of errors with some of its test data. ECBC's internal assessment of these data indicates that concentrations of the CWAs used in testing were less than that required by NIOSH test procedures. Testing conducted during the period of July 2012 through October 2013 is affected. The majority of the affected testing was conducted in support of NFPA 1981, 2013 edition approvals in process.

The particular tests in question relate only to the ability of the respirator (SCBA face piece) configurations to protect against CWAs. The affected respirator configurations will provide all of the non-CBRN protections for which the NIOSH approvals are issued. The non-CBRN protections are verified by NIOSH-conducted tests and evaluations. These NIOSH-conducted tests have not been compromised by the errors discovered in the CWA testing.

CWA re-testing at ECBC of all respirators (SCBA face pieces) previously submitted for approval for which CWA testing was conducted during the July 2012 through October 2013 period is expected to resume with an expedited schedule anticipated to be complete no later than April 1, 2014.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) recognizes that these delays are outside of the control of grantees and we will work with grantees as required. In the event a reasonable period of performance (POP) extension is required, AFGP will work with grantees to extend their period of performance (POP). Grantees must be making every effort to complete their scope of work (SOW) as promptly as possible, to include conducting their necessary market research and completing their solicitation and procurement, to include placing order for product.

If an AFG grantee believes that the testing delays will materially impact the delivery of ordered product, grantees are encouraged to contact their Regional Fire Program Specialist approximately 30-45 days prior to the end of their POP to discuss their progress to date in completing their SOW. At that time, if it is determined that a POP extension is required, grantees will be given instruction as to how to submit their amendment request. A listing of AFG Regional Fire Program Specialists may be found at <http://www.fema.gov/fire-grant-contact-information>.

AFG Home Page: www.fema.gov/firegrants

AFG Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.fema.gov/2012-frequently-asked-questions>

AFG Regional Representatives: <http://www.fema.gov/fire-grant-contact-information>

AFG Help Desk: E-mail: firegrants@fema.dhs.gov

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