



MSA Unveils Next-Generation Breathing Apparatus in Indianapolis

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Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Designed to Meet New NFPA Performance Requirements

PITTSBURGH, Pa., April 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- MSA (NYSE: MSA), the world's leading developer of sophisticated safety equipment, today unveiled at the 79th annual Fire Department Instructor's Conference (FDIC) in Indianapolis, Ind., a new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that provides new levels of protection and performance for firefighters. The next generation SCBA, called the FireHawk M7, is designed to meet tough performance requirements established by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA).

Most notable among the new NFPA requirements is a stipulation that Personal Alert Safety Systems (PASS) -- an SCBA component that sounds a loud, piercing alarm whenever a firefighter becomes disabled or lies motionless for 30 seconds -- emit a 95-decibel alarm at temperatures up to 500 degrees Fahrenheit. These devices, which also can function as a stand-alone device, were previously only required to sound such an alarm at temperatures up to 200 degrees Fahrenheit. The new NFPA requirements for PASS functionality address shortcomings that were noted by the NFPA in late 2005, and subsequently publicized in an investigative report published this year by MSNBC.com.

The PASS Alarm on the FireHawk M7 was developed by MSA with input from third-party acoustic experts. It utilizes patent-pending technology to actually exceed the NFPA high-temperature requirements, as well as those designed to eliminate accidental alarm "muffling."

In addition to the patent-pending alarm, the FireHawk M7 also features fire-resistant electronics and the M7 Accountability System. Based on MSA technology introduced in mid-2006, this new accountability system serves as a fire ground management system that combines the latest computer software with a high-performance radio module to keep incident commanders apprised of multiple firefighter-related conditions. This includes SCBA cylinder pressure, service-time, PASS alarms (motion or manual), thermal alarms, battery status, radio connectivity, and evacuation acknowledgement of up to 100 firefighters within a one-mile-line-of-sight all on a computer-based user- interface.

"Because firefighters are the first ones to run into a burning building when everyone else is running out, there is a vital need to outfit them with the most advanced safety equipment that will allow them to work efficiently and safely," said Ron Herring, Vice President of Innovation and Total Quality. "Developing innovations in respiratory protection has been a core competency of MSA for nearly a century. With the M7, we have developed the highest- quality, most technologically advanced SCBA today."

In addition to new regulations concerning PASS devices, the new NFPA performance standards also raise performance measures on water immersion resistance, data-logging and user wear-and-tear.

Established in 1914, MSA is a global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of sophisticated safety products that protect people's health and safety. Sophisticated safety products typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations. The company's comprehensive line of products is used by workers around the world in the fire service, homeland security, construction and other industries, as well as the military. Principal products include self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, gas detection instruments, head protection, respirators, thermal imaging cameras and ballistic body armor. The company also provides a broad range of consumer and contractor safety products through retail channels. These products are marketed and sold under the MSA Safety Works brand. MSA has annual sales of more than \$900 million, manufacturing operations throughout the world, and more than 30 international locations. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at www.msanet.com.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: To arrange a demonstration with a fire department in your area, please contact Mark Deasy or Samantha Johns at 412-967-3357
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