



Mine Safety Appliances Company • P.O. Box 426 • Pittsburgh, PA 15230

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Writers Direct Dial No.

User Notice NFPA 1981-2002 Edition Air Masks

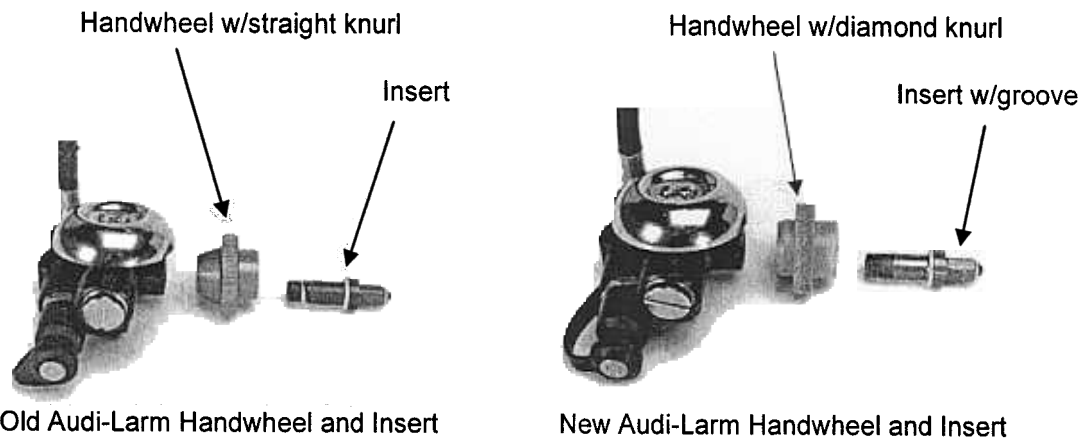
December 22, 2004

Dear Air Mask User,

MSA has received several reports of cylinder valve damage occurring to NFPA 1981-2002 Edition Air Masks as a result of impacting the cylinder valve and Audi-Larm. In some instances, the impact was significant enough to cause the valve to separate at the CGA outlet threads near the coupling nut, resulting in the loss of air.

Although the air masks are fully compliant with all requirements of the NIOSH and NFPA standards and no injuries were ever associated with these incidents, MSA has taken preventive action through the development of a product improvement to provide additional protection against this occurrence in the future. This notice applies only to NFPA 1981-2002 Edition Air Masks.

An upgrade kit has been developed that can be obtained at no charge for all MSA NFPA 1981-2002 Edition Air Masks. The upgrade kit consists of a modified Audi-Larm handwheel and insert designed to reduce the stress on the cylinder valve should an impact in this area occur. For identification purposes, diamond knurl replaces the straight knurl on the Audi-Larm handwheel. A groove has been added near the hex end of the insert. Air masks using the prior design were shipped from MSA from August 2002 to approximately the date of this notice.



MSA recommends that all users of NFPA 1981-2002 Edition Air Masks upgrade their air masks with this kit. Although the kit requires no special tools or training for installation, MSA recommends that users contact their local MSA authorized distributor or an MSA certified CARE technician and arrange for the installation of the appropriate upgrade kit (2216 or 3000 psig - P/N 10062088, 4500 psig – P/N 10062089).

We regret any inconvenience this situation may cause; however, it is important that we take this preventive measure to address this potential safety concern. If you have any questions, please contact MSA Customer Service at 1-877-MSA-3473.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles J. Seibel, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charles J. Seibel, Jr.
Manager of Product Safety