

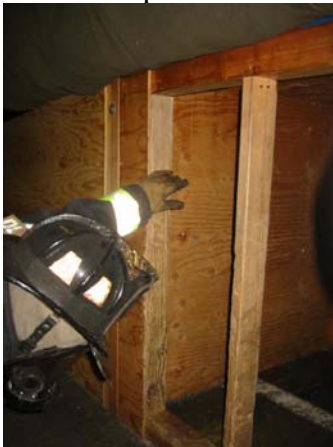
Quick Drill

Self Rescue

“Swim through the Opening” Technique

The time may come in your career where you will have to perform a self rescue technique to escape a dangerous environment. We have all heard the stories of firefighters who have had to exit out windows to escape a fast moving fire. This becomes extremely more dangerous and difficult when this event takes place above the ground floor. Another option to consider is a quick breaching of an interior wall and an escape through the wall studs. In order for this to be a viable alternative to exiting out a window, the firefighter needs to periodically practice the techniques and be able to perform the maneuver quickly and smoothly.

One technique that is both quick and effective for escaping through the wall studs is known as the “Swim” technique. This method works well because it doesn’t require the firefighter to make any adjustments to their SCBA. Below is a break down of the simple steps that allow a firefighter in full turnouts and SCBA to quickly escape between standard 16” spaced wall studs.



The firefighter approaches the breached area and sits down with their back to the opening and places their SCBA bottle through the hole. It is important to make sure the bottle valve clears the bottom plate.



The firefighter reaches back with the left hand (like a backstroke) and gets that shoulder through the opening. The reason to put the left arm through first is it keeps the RIC Universal Air Connect from getting caught as you rotate to your side.



With his bottle and one shoulder through the opening, he should be able to rotate his body around through the hole so he comes out on the other side with the SCBA intact.