

WAC 296-36-130 Special decompression chamber. (1) **General.** The special low-pressure decompression chamber shall be provided for use when the nature of the work requires decompression times and procedures clearly within the scope of WAC 296-36-110(4).

(2) **Size and capacity.** The headroom in the special decompression chamber shall be not less than 7 feet and the cubical content shall provide at least 50 cubic feet of air space for each person. For each occupant there shall be provided 4 square feet of free walking area and 3 square feet of seating space exclusive of area required for lavatory and toilet facilities. The rated capacity shall be based on the stated minimum space per person and shall be posted at the chamber entrance. The posted capacity shall not be exceeded except in case of emergency.

(3) **Equipment.** Each special decompression chamber shall be equipped with the following:

(a) A clock or clocks suitably placed so that the attendant and the chamber occupants can readily ascertain the time;

(b) Pressure gages which will indicate to the attendant and to the chamber occupants the pressure in the chamber;

(c) Valves to enable the attendant to reduce or cut off the supply of compressed air into the chamber;

(d) Valves and pipes in connection with the air supply and exhaust arranged that the chamber pressure can be controlled from within and without;

(e) Effective means of verbal intercommunication between the attendant, occupants of the chamber and the air compressor plant;

(f) A glass bulls-eye at the entrance to permit observation of the chamber occupants.

(4) **Seating facilities.** Seating facilities in special decompression chambers shall be so arranged as to permit a normal sitting posture without cramping. Seating space not less than 18 inches by 24 inches in width shall be provided per occupant. Seat and back shall be padded or cushioned with a one-inch thickness of foam rubber or its equivalent.

(5) **Lighting and heating.** Lighting and heating shall comply with that for man locks, WAC 296-36-125(5).

(6) **Ventilation.** Ventilation shall comply with that for man locks, WAC 296-36-125(6).

(7) **Record of decompression.** Final stage decompression in the special chamber shall be part of the records required by WAC 296-36-125(7).

(8) **Automatic controls.** Special decompression chambers shall be equipped with automatic controls complying with WAC 296-36-125(8), for man locks.

(9) **Sanitation.** One toilet and one wash basin with hot and cold water in a screened or enclosed recess shall be provided for each 10 units of rated capacity as defined in WAC 296-36-130(2). An adequate supply of disposable towels, drinking water and disposable cups shall be provided. No refuse or discarded material of any kind shall be permitted to accumulate and the chamber shall be kept clean.

(10) **Location.** Where practicable the special decompression chamber shall be situated adjacent to the man lock on the atmospheric pressure side of the bulkhead. When located adjacent to the man lock a passageway shall be provided connecting the special chamber with the man lock to permit workmen in the process of decompression to move from the man lock to the special chamber without a reduction in the ambient pressure from that designated for the initial pressure of the

final stage of decompression. The passageway shall be so arranged as to not interfere with the normal operation of the man lock nor with the release of the occupants of the special chamber to atmospheric pressure upon the completion of the decompression procedure.

In event that the special chamber is located remote from the man lock a means of pressurized transport shall be provided to move the men from the man lock to the special chamber without a reduction in the ambient pressure from that designated for the initial pressure of the final stage of decompression.

Under unusual circumstances or in an emergency and only with the express permission of the appointed physician, decanting procedures may be used to facilitate the movement of men at atmospheric pressure from the man lock to the special decompression chamber for the final stage of decompression. RECOMPRESSION OF THE MEN MUST TAKE PLACE WITHIN FIVE MINUTES IN THE SPECIAL CHAMBER. THE MEDICAL LOCK SHALL NOT BE USED FOR THE RECOMPRESSION.

(11) **Design.** The special decompression chamber and passageway or pressurized transport shall be designed for an operating pressure of 20 pounds per square inch gage pressure.

(12) **Fire protection.** All applicable provisions of WAC 296-36-190, fire prevention and firefighting shall apply to special decompression chambers.

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