

Standard for Hypobaric Facilities





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NFPA® 99B

Standard for

Hypobaric Facilities

2021 Edition

This edition of NFPA 99B, *Standard for Hypobaric Facilities*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Hyperbaric and Hypobaric Facilities and released by the Correlating Committee on Health Care Facilities. It was issued by the Standards Council on March 15, 2020, with an effective date of April 4, 2020, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 99B was approved as an American National Standard on April 4, 2020.

Origin and Development of NFPA 99B

In 1965, when the Subcommittee on Hyperbaric Facilities was appointed, several hospitals were employing hypobaric therapy to treat respiratory diseases. Additionally, NASA and the U.S. Air Force were working with hypobaric chambers for space and air flight. The name of the subcommittee was then changed to the Subcommittee on Hyperbaric and Hypobaric Facilities, and the initial version of a document on this subject was prepared. A tentative standard on the subject was adopted at the 1971 Annual Meeting. In May of 1972, the document was adopted as official standard NFPA 56E, *Standard for Hypobaric Facilities*. The document was revised again for the 1977 Annual Meeting.

A complete review of NFPA 56E was accomplished for the 1981 Fall Meeting and resulted in a 1982 edition of the standard.

In 1984, NFPA 56E was combined with 11 other health care documents to form NFPA 99, *Standard for Health Care Facilities*. NFPA 56E essentially became Chapter 11 of NFPA 99. In the 1984 edition of NFPA 99, the major change made to the NFPA 56E content was a complete revision of requirements for Class D chambers to reflect their use for high-altitude training purposes. (Such chambers do not require as extensive safety precautions as research and clinical chambers.)

During the revision for the 1987 edition of NFPA 99, it was brought to the attention of the Subcommittee on Hyperbaric and Hypobaric Facilities that hypobaric chambers were no longer used for medical purposes. Since the material on hypobaric facilities no longer belonged in NFPA 99, the subcommittee proposed that it be separated from NFPA 99 and published as a distinct NFPA document. This new document was designated NFPA 99B, *Standard for Hypobaric Facilities*.

Minor revisions were made to editions adopted in 1987 and 1990.

For the 1993 edition, the significant change was the identification of the safety director as the person responsible for disseminating information on hazards associated with operating hypobaric facilities.

For the 1996 edition, the major changes included clarifying the application of the document (Chapters 1–4) and deleting a Class F–type chamber because the committee was unaware of hypobaric techniques involving artificial atmospheres.

The 1999 and 2002 editions included editorial changes and format, language, and structure revisions in accordance with the *Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents*.

The 2005 edition was modified to clarify some requirements. The ventilation rate was specified by the purchaser, detection in Class D chambers was made optional, the wiring method in Class E chambers was downgraded, aviation-type masks in chambers were made optional, the hazards of titanium were discussed, and fittings were listed for oxygen service.

The 2010 edition made minor changes in definitions to correlate with other definitions from the *Glossary of Terms*.

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