



The Rescom[®] Communications Rope – Questions and Facts

1. I have been told communications rope isn't designed for confined space entry. Is this true?

Although certain types of communications ropes are built for other applications such as diving, not all communication ropes are alike. The Rescom[®] Rope is, in fact, designed primarily for Confined Space Entry and Rescue. The Rescom Rope features a unique construction which allows it to meet the high standards demanded by confined space entry and rescue professionals, as well as, O.H.S.A and the N.F.P.A. The following facts separate the Rescom from other communication ropes:

- The Rescom system is a full duplex two-wire system, differing from most other confined space systems which use four wires. Because our system uses only two wires we are able to produce a communication rope which exceeds the most rigorous standards, with a breaking strength over 10,000 lbs.
- The Rescom Rope is part of an intrinsically safe rated system, and has been certified as intrinsically safe for all types of confined spaces when used in combination with the Rescom Modular system. (see rating here: <http://www.rescom.ca/intrinsicsafetyratings.html>)
- In addition to Intrinsic Safety, the Rescom Rope is [certified](#) to N.F.P.A standards. Rescom is the only confined space communications product on the market today that features an N.F.P.A rated life/safety communications rope.
- The Rescom Rope features a breaking strength which exceeds 10,000 lbs. Our communications rope has been tested and is certified to maintain rope and communications integrity, up to the breaking point of 10,800 lbs.
- The Rescom Rope can be used with mechanical advantage systems, belayed, tied off, and even used for rapid descent. The Rescom Rope can be used in exactly the same manner as any other rated rescue rope, with only a few exceptions. (i.e. we do not recommend using the Rescom Rope for high line operations, as the forces involved may actually exceed the breaking strength of the rope)

2. What's the advantage to using communication rope?

The greatest advantage to using a rated communication rope is simple: It enhances safety and improves on efficiency.

- The Rescom Rope can serve as a Primary or Secondary lifeline, while at the same time providing continuous, hands-free communication. Using the Rescom Rope eliminates the need to add yet another cable to the configuration; easing line management and setup time – *an absolutely vital advantage in emergency situations.*
- During a rescue situation, the Rescom Rope may be used to help retrieve the victim, while also providing vital continuous voice contact. In this way the Rescom Rope is a valuable tool during rescue rather than just another piece of equipment in the way.
- The option of using a rated communications rope makes the use of hard-line communication possible in situations where a cable system could be compromised.

3. Won't the communication wire break as the rope stretches?

No. The communication wire will not break before the rope does. The maximum test strength on the Rescom Rope is certified to be 10,800 lbs. - that means the force on the rope would have to exceed 10,800 lbs. before the communication wires could break!

- The Rescom Rope has been tested and certified as being able to maintain communication even while under a test weight in excess 9,000 lbs. - *the standard tensile strength for a two man confined space/rescue rope*. It is unlikely the forces involved in the average confined space entry or rescue would exceed that weight. We have never received a report of communication wires breaking inside the rope while used under normal and recommended conditions.

- Users and Trainers report they have had Rescom Communication Ropes in regular service for many years, performing tasks ranging from confined space entry and rescues, to rope access, to tactical rappels. Our Users report they have never had an incident where they have lost communication due to a broken wire inside the rope.

4. What about shock loading? Isn't it expensive to replace a communication rope due to shock loading, as opposed to a regular rescue rope?

All rescue ropes have a limited life, as do all communication cables. However, under average use conditions, and with proper care, the Rescom Rope can have a relatively long and useful life span. Like all rated rescue ropes, the Rescom Communications Rope requires regular inspection. The general rule is - when in doubt retire your rope. This may, at first, seem like a drawback to anyone considering exploring the advantages of rated communication ropes. **However, the following should be considered as well:**

- Generally we recommend that the Rescom Rope be used as the secondary lifeline in situations where a significant fall is possible. Since a regular rescue rope is less expensive to replace, using the Rescom Rope as your secondary will help save it from possible shock loading, while still supplying continuous hands-free communication and simplifying line management.

- Should an incident occur that results in shock loading, the communication wires within will remain intact and communication will be maintained throughout, aiding any necessary rescue while at the same time not adding unnecessary additional line management concerns.

- Ultimately one must consider that the significant advantages realized through the use of a rated communications rope, outweigh the outside risk of having to replace it due to shock loading. However, should the Rescom Rope be subjected to shock loading, and must be discarded, it will ultimately have served it's dual purpose well.

5. Cable is easier to keep clean than rope.

Like all equipment it's a question of using the right tools for the environment one is going to be working in. Generally cable is easier to clean. However, in most situations any dirt the Rescom Rope contacts during use, can be removed easily. There are several methods we recommend for cleaning Rescom Rope.

- A) After use, clean any dirt or mud from the rope surface using a bristle brush.
- B) Wash your rope in a washing machine using a mild detergent and soft water. Hang the rope to dry after washing – ideally in a room temperature of 20° C. (68° F)

In situations where the entrant is likely to encounter oils, solvents, or other hazardous contaminants, we recommend using our **DuraCORE™** Communication Cable instead of the communication rope. If there is doubt as to whether your rope will survive certain chemicals it may be exposed to, we suggest you obtain a rope sample from the manufacturer and test it. If there is doubt, use a regular rated rescue rope in combination with a **DuraCORE™** hardline cable system.