

## Respiratory Protection Program

- Written Program with a Program Administrator
- Medical Evaluations
- Fit testing
- Maintenance, Care, Storage
- Training
- Recordkeeping

## RESPIRATOR USE TIPS

- Inspect respirator before use for damage.
- Don or Doff respirator correctly
- Conduct Positive or Negative Seal Check
- Cartridges must match specific contaminants
- Report any physical changes that might require a new fit test
- Use Self-Containing Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) for entry and escape in any Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health environments (IDLH)

## **DC 37 SAFETY AND HEALTH FACT SHEET**

### **RESPIRATORY PROTECTION**

Engineering control measures must be employed to reduce exposure to occupational diseases caused by breathing air contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, or vapors.

Absent engineering controls, respiratory protection must be worn whenever you are working in a hazardous atmosphere.

The appropriate respirator will depend on the contaminant(s) to which you are exposed and the protection factor (PF) required. Respirators must be NIOSH-approved and medical evaluation and training must be provided prior to use.

#### **Respiratory Protection Program**

An employer is required to implement a written respiratory protection program when employees are required to wear respirators.

- **Medical evaluations**

A physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) shall perform medical evaluations using a medical questionnaire or an initial medical examination that obtains the same information as the medical questionnaire.

Follow-up medical examination shall be provided as necessary.

- **Fit testing**

The employee must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size of respirator that will be used.

Employees must pass an appropriate qualitative fit test (QLFT) or quantitative fit test.

The employee must be fit tested prior to initial use of the respirator, whenever a different respirator face piece (size, style, model or make) is used, and at least annually thereafter.

Additional fit test when the employee reports physical changes that may affect the respirator fit.

- **Maintenance and Care**

Clean, and Disinfect after use.

Inspect before each use.

Store to protect from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, damaging chemicals, and deformation of the face piece and exhalation valve.

- **Training**

Employer must provide effective training to employees who are required to use respirators. The training must be comprehensive, understandable, and recur annually, and more often if necessary.

Employer must provide the basic information on respirators in **Appendix D** to employees who voluntarily wear respirators when not required by OSHA Standard or the employer to do so.

- **Recordkeeping**

Employer must maintain records.

Written materials must be made available upon request by employees.

Employees who have facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face shall not be permitted to wear respirators with tight-fitting face pieces.

- **Types of Respirators:**

- **Approved filtering face** pieces (dust masks) can be used for dust, mists, welding fumes, etc. They do not provide protection from gases or vapors.  
**DO NOT USE FOR ASBESTOS OR LEAD.**
- **Half-face** respirators can be used for protection against most vapors, acid gases, dust or welding fumes
- **Full-face** respirators can be used for protection against most vapors, acid gases, dust or welding fumes. The face-shield protects face and eyes from irritants and contaminants
- **Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR)**
- **Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)** is used for entry and escape from atmospheres that are considered immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) or oxygen deficient.

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/respirators/>