

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM FACT SHEET

General Scope

A respirator is a personal protective device used to protect the wearer from inhalation of harmful levels of airborne contaminants. The use of respirators is acceptable only when engineering or work practice controls (e.g., local exhaust ventilation) are inadequate or not feasible, or while these controls are being designed or constructed. Respirators must be carefully selected, properly fitted, regularly inspected and cleaned, and repaired when broken. Wearers must be medically evaluated for respirator use and trained in the appropriate use, care, maintenance and limitations of respirator protective devices. Work areas must be periodically evaluated to determine the appropriate level of respirator protection necessary.

Applicable University Policy/EHSO Contact

UHM Respirator Protection Program; Industrial Hygiene section (956-3204)

Applicable Regulations

29 CFR 1910.134 - OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard

Note: More specific requirements for respirator use may be contained within substance – specific regulations (e.g., asbestos, formaldehyde, lead, etc.)

Summary of Requirements

- > Development of a written respirator protection program.
- > Respirator users shall be evaluated by a licensed health care professional to determine if they are physically able to perform work while using a respirator.
- > Respirators shall be selected based upon the contaminant hazards presented to the wearer.
- > Training shall be provided annually and include information on: selection of respirators; inspection, maintenance, storage and cleaning of respirators; limitations and emergency procedures; and methods of donning, adjusting and fit-checking .
- > NIOSH - certified respirators must be used.
- > All negative pressure respirators shall be fit-tested on an annual basis.
- > Compressed air used for supplied air respirators shall comply with the air quality requirements for Grade D Breathable Air described in CGA Commodity Specifications G-7.1-1989.
- > Current records for training, fit-testing, medical evaluation and hazard assessments should be maintained by the supervisors.
- > The UHM Respirator Protection Program shall be reviewed annually with modifications implemented as necessary.

Voluntary Use of Respirators

When an employee chooses to use a dust mask but is not required to wear one for protection against a hazard, the employee does not need training or fit-testing but must be informed of Appendix D of the University's respiratory protection program.

If an employee chooses to use a non-disposable, tight fitting facepiece (i.e. rubber half-face) but is not required to, then the employee must comply with all requirements of the University's respiratory protection program.