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# RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

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# Respiratory Protection

## 1.0 Purpose & Scope

### 1.1 Purpose.

- 1.1.1 Employee protection – To protect WCI employees from overexposures to various airborne contaminants.
- 1.1.2 Regulatory compliance – To fulfill the written program requirements specified in OSHA regulation 29 CFR 1910.134 (Respiratory Protection).

### 1.2 Scope.

The provisions of this program apply to all employees who are required to wear a respirator to prevent overexposure to potentially hazardous air contaminants. When a respirator is worn voluntarily, only Appendix A shall apply.

## 2.0 Respirator Availability & Selection

### 2.1 Respirator availability.

WCI shall provide respirators for all employees who are required to wear them. Also, disposable particulate masks shall be provided. Foremen shall show employees where the disposable mask are kept and shall maintain a stock of them in this location.

### 2.2 Restricted use.

No one is to be issued a respirator unless they have been medically evaluated, fit tested and trained. This restriction does not apply to employees who wish to voluntarily wear a disposable particulate mask.

### 2.3 Hazard survey & respirator selection.

Potential Exposures	Specific Work Activity	Respiratory Protection
Respirable silica dust	Breaking, jackhammering, crushing, cutting, sawing, grinding &/or demolition of concrete, rock, stone, block, brick or concrete-related products (anything containing silica)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N95 or N100 particulate mask (2 headbands – N100 preferred)</li> <li>½ face with N95 or N100 filters (N100 filters preferred)</li> </ul>
Biohazard	Any work task where the potential exists for a biohazard material (sewer line) to splash or spray toward the face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N95 particulate mask</li> </ul>
Lead	Removal, handling or disturbing of lead-containing pipes or lead-contaminated soil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respirator shall be chosen based on specific nature of exposure.</li> </ul> <p>(In most cases, a ½ face respirator with N100 filter will be sufficient.)</p>

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Asbestos	Removal, handling or disturbing of asbestos-containing pipes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respirator shall be chosen based on specific nature of exposure. (In most cases, a ½ face respirator with N100 filter will be sufficient.)</li> </ul>
Paints, adhesives & solvents	Painting, cementing or use of any solvent-based product.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respirator shall be chosen based on specific nature of exposure.</li> </ul> <p>(In most cases, a ½ face respirator with organic vapor cartridge will be sufficient.)</p>

## 3.0 Medical Evaluations

### 3.1 Purpose of medical evaluation.

Wearing a respirator places a physiological burden on the body. This burden varies from person to person depending on such variables as the type of respirator used, health of wearer and environmental conditions under which the respirator is worn. WCI must be assured that each respirator wearer is physically capable of safely using a respirator under reasonably foreseeable conditions.

### 3.2 Mandatory medical evaluation.

All respirator-wearing employees (except those wearing dust masks voluntarily) must undergo a medical evaluation before being authorized to use a respirator. Authorization will be subject to the licensed healthcare provider clearing the employee for respirator use.

### 3.3 Medical evaluation process.

3.3.1 Questionnaire – WCI shall use the OSHA medical questionnaire as the primary means of complying with medical evaluation requirements. The questionnaire will be administered confidentially to respirator-wearing employees in a manner whereby their questions can be promptly answered. Completed forms are confidential documents and shall be immediately placed into a sealed envelope and forwarded to a licensed healthcare professional for evaluation.

3.3.2 Medical examination – May be required at the discretion of the licensed healthcare provider evaluating questionnaires. If an examination is recommended, then it shall be scheduled at a time mutually convenient for the employee & WCI.

3.3.3 Future evaluation – Future medical evaluations may be necessary if:

- A respirator-wearing employee reports medical problems that arise or are aggravated by respirator usage.
- Significant changes occur that could affect the physiological burden placed on the respirator wearer. Examples may include changes in work rate, tasks, procedures, equipment or environment.



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- If the licensed healthcare provider determines that reevaluation is necessary.
- If WCI determines that reevaluation is necessary due to noted concerns, complaints or incidents.

3.3.4 Opportunity for review – Each employee shall have the opportunity to discuss the results of his/her medical questionnaire or exam with the evaluating healthcare professional.

3.3.5 Costs – All medical evaluations and associated work required by this program shall be provided at no cost to the employee.

## 3.4 Evaluation results.

Upon completion of an evaluation, the licensed healthcare provider shall forward to WCI a written recommendation. To maintain confidentiality, this recommendation shall include only the following information:

- Whether the wearer is able to use the specified respirator(s) as described
- Any limitations on usage
- Whether or not follow-up medical evaluations are recommended
- Confirmation that recommendations have been shared with the employee

## 3.5 Licensed healthcare provider information.

The program administrator shall forward the following information to the licensed healthcare provider prior to evaluation of employee medical questionnaires:

- Type & weight of the respirators to be used
- Duration & frequency of respirator use
- Expected physical work effort
- Additional protective equipment or clothing that may be used or worn
- Temperature and humidity extremes to be encountered
- A copy of this program

## 3.6 Medical evaluation recordkeeping.

The program administrator shall see that each medical evaluation record is retained for an employee's term of employment plus 30 years.

However, medical evaluations for employees who work here less than one year shall not be kept. Their medical evaluation recordkeeping shall be offered to them at time of employment termination. If not taken, these records shall be destroyed in the same manner as other confidential documents.

## 4.0 ***Fit Testing***

### 4.1 **Purpose of fit testing.**

Fit testing ensures that the specific model & size of the tight-fitting respirator to be used in the work environment makes a complete seal with the wearer's face, thus assuring maximum respirator effectiveness.

### 4.2 **Mandatory fit testing.**

All employees required to wear a tight-fitting respirator must successfully complete a fit test that follows an OSHA-prescribed qualitative fit test method. This fit test must be administered by a qualified person and conducted:

- Before being authorized to use tight-fitting facepiece respirators
- Whenever a different size, style, make or model of respirator is used
- Whenever the user exhibits significant physical changes that can affect fit, such as facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery or changes in body weight
- Otherwise, annually

### 4.3 **Documenting fit test results.**

Results for each wearer's fit test shall be documented. This documentation shall be maintained on file until replaced by that for the next fit test.

### 4.4 **Unsuccessful fit tests.**

If a respirator wearer is unable to achieve an effective seal with his/her respirator during the fit test, then a different type or size of respirator will be provided and s/he shall be retested.

## 5.0 ***Respirator Use, Maintenance & Care***

### 5.1 **Manufacturer instructions.**

The wearer shall understand the respirator manufacturer's instructions regarding proper use, limitations, maintenance, care and storage prior to initial use. This information shall be discussed as a part of respirator training. The wearer is responsible for using and caring for his/her respirator in accordance with these instructions.

### 5.2 **Proper seal.**

Respirators are only effective if they are properly sealed to the face.



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- 5.2.1 Facial hair – Not permitted where it interferes with the respirator’s valve operation or with proper seal of the facepiece to the face.
- 5.2.2 Corrective glasses & PPE – If these interfere with the respirator facepiece seal, alternate provisions will be made to allow for an equal degree of personal protection.
- 5.2.3 Seal check – Wearer shall perform a positive-pressure or negative-pressure seal check each time the respirator is put on. Seal checks are not substitutes for the required annual fit tests.

## 5.3 When to leave the respirator work area.

Respirator wearers must leave the area of contamination:

- To wash-up
- To change or remove the respirator
- To clean or replace any respirator components, including filters
- If contaminant breakthrough is detected or facepiece leaks
- If there is a significant change in breathing resistance

## 5.4 Maintenance.

Improperly maintained respirators can create or contribute to undue physiological stress and/or air contaminant exposure. Wearers are responsible for assuring that their respirators are clean, stored in a correct manner and regularly inspected.

- 5.4.1 Sanitation – Wearers are responsible to assure that their respirators are clean and do not present a sanitation hazard. Disposable respirators are to be discarded after each use. Where reusable respirators are provided, employees shall be responsible to regularly clean them in accordance with manufacturer instructions.
- 5.4.2 Dust mask &/or filter change-out schedule – Wearers are responsible to assure that the respirators they use remain efficient. Dust masks and/or filters must be changed-out whenever breathing resistance increases noticeably, contaminant breakthrough is detected, or otherwise daily.
- 5.4.3 Inspection – Wearers are responsible to assure that the respirators they use remain in good working order. Each respirator must be inspected before each use and (for reusable respirators) after each cleaning. Immediately discard any damaged, deteriorated or distorted respirator and obtain a new one.

## 5.5 Proper storage.

Wearers are responsible for properly storing their respirators when not in use.

- Avoid areas that are excessively dirty, dusty, wet or in direct sunlight
- Avoid storage with or near hazardous chemicals
- Avoid storage in areas subject to extreme temperatures
- Use a plastic bag or cabinet to help keep reusable respirators clean
- Place the mask in an upright position or as recommended by mfr.
- Do not pile clothing, tools, equipment or other items on top of respirator

## **6.0 Employee Training**

### **6.1 Employee training.**

Training for respirator-wearing employees shall cover the following topics at a minimum:

- Why respirator use is necessary (respiratory hazards in the workplace)
- How protection can be compromised by improper fit, use & maintenance
- Limitations and capabilities of the respirators issued
- How to inspect put-on, take-off, store and use issued respirators
- How to perform seal checks
- How to recognize medical signs/symptoms that may limit effective respirator use
- Basic provisions and responsibilities in this program

### **6.2 Trainer qualifications.**

All respiratory protection training shall be administered by a person who is knowledgeable of the subject matter covered by this program.

### **6.3 Training frequency.**

All respirator-wearing employees will be trained prior to initial respirator use and annually thereafter. Changes in respiratory exposures, use of different respiratory protective equipment or program inadequacies may necessitate additional or more frequent training.

## **7.0 Annual Program Review**

### **7.1 Review purpose & frequency.**

This program shall be reviewed annually to assure that all workplace respiratory hazards have been assessed and that the program is accurate, effective and being properly implemented. This review shall be conducted by the program coordinator, a qualified person designated by him/her and/or the WCI safety committee.

### **7.2 Review procedures.**

The Respiratory Protection Annual Program Evaluation Report shall be used to document each year's review. This documentation shall be kept on file until replaced by the next year's report.

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## Appendix A Voluntary Dust Mask Use

Review of the following information shall be considered sufficient. No medical evaluation or further training is necessary.

### **OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.134 - Appendix D** **Information for Employees Using Respirators** **When Not Required Under the Standard**

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

I have reviewed and understand the above information regarding voluntary use of respirators.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date