

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION (DETENTION, FIRE/EMS, MAINTENANCE, PWD, & LAW ENFORCEMENT)

OBJECTIVES

- Staff will learn respiratory safe practices, regulatory requirements, and agency policy
- Upon completion, staff will inspect respiratory protection equipment

An estimated 5 million workers are required to wear respirators in 1.3 million workplaces throughout the United States. Respirators protect workers against insufficient oxygen environments, harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors, and sprays. These hazards may cause cancer, lung impairment, other diseases, or even death.

Compliance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standards could prevent hundreds of deaths and thousands of illnesses annually.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Compulsory to OSHA's respiratory protection standard employers are responsible for:

- Developing a written respiratory program
- Assigning a program administrator
- Prepare work-site procedures.
- Selecting appropriate respirators based on the hazard(s)
- Training employees on use, fit, maintenance, cleaning, and storage of respirators.
- Fit testing employees using respirators prior to first use and annually thereafter
- Providing medical evaluation to determine employee's ability to wear respirator

Employees are responsible for:

- Wearing respirators when and where required
- Using equipment according to training procedures for each type and model
 - Being familiar with the agency's program
 - Caring for and maintaining respirators as instructed and storing them in a clean sanitary location
 - Informing supervisors of respirator problems

- Informing supervisor or Program Administrator of any potential respiratory hazard or any aspect of the program that the employee feels is not being adequately addressed

MEDICAL EVALUATION

A medical evaluation is required for any employee required to wear a respirator. Every employee must first pass a medical exam and have medical approval before wearing the equipment on the job.

FIT TEST

Fit testing is required for employees wearing respirators with a negative or positive pressure, tight fitting face piece. The fit test should be conducted with the respirator the employee will use on the job. Fit tests are to be conducted:

- Prior to initial use of respirator
- If a different respirator is used
- If there are changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect the respirator fit:
 - Facial scarring
 - Dental changes
 - Cosmetic surgery
 - Drastic change in weight.
- On an annual basis

RESPIRATOR USE

- Each time a respirator is worn, the employee must conduct a "user seal check"
- Respirators are to be regularly cleaned and disinfected according to the manufactures instructions
- Maintenance involves a thorough visual inspection for cleanliness and/or defects. Inspection includes:
 - Face piece
 - Head straps
 - Valves
 - Filter/cartridges
 - Air supply system.
- Defective respirators or those with defective parts need to be taken out of service immediately

TRAINING

- Training should cover the following:
 - OSHA requirements
 - Respiratory hazards at the workplace
 - Additional PPE that may be required
 - Respirator limitations

- Proper selection and use of respirators
- How to perform a user seal fit check
- Fit testing
- Emergency respirator use procedures
- Respirator maintenance and storage

POLICY

Discuss all agency policies relating to respiratory use and protection.

CLOSING

- *Encourage discussion about this presentation and respirator use.*
- *Upon completion of this presentation, staff should inspect their respiratory protection.*