

RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

The Respiratory Protective Equipment Policy is designed to ensure that the correct respiratory protection is provided and properly used by personnel at the University as dictated by the use situation. Compliance to this policy will ensure the University is meeting the requirements of all applicable codes and regulations.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

The Occupational Hygienist is responsible for administering this program, which includes developing and implementing an effective Respiratory Protection Program with respect to hazardous material exposure.

RESPONSIBILITY

The selection of the proper respiratory protective equipment is the responsibility of the Occupational Hygienist or qualified alternate in the Department of Occupational Health and Safety. Compliance to this policy is the responsibility of the Deans, Budget Unit Heads, Supervisors or Individual Researchers. Any costs associated with compliance to this policy will be carried by the individual budget unit or researcher.

All persons required to use a respirator will use it in accordance with the instructions received. The user will take all necessary measures to care for the respirator provided and will report any damage or malfunctions to his or her immediate supervisor.

DEFINITIONS

- CSA

The Canadian Standards Association which is a widely recognized standards setting body.

- IDLH

An atmosphere which is Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH). This condition is assumed under any one of the following conditions:

- i) A known contaminant at an IDLH concentration;
- ii) A known contaminant at an unknown concentration;
- iii) An unknown contaminant;
- iv) An oxygen deficiency (less than 19.5 %);
- v) Contaminants at or above lower explosive limit; or
- vi) A confined space which has not been tested for a safe atmosphere.

- NIOSH

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, a standards setting body which is based in the United States. This body sets standards for respirator construction and use.

* **Qualitative Fit-Check**

A fit-check which uses an irritant smoke or odorous material. The respirator wearer uses his or her senses to detect leakage into the face piece of the respirator.

* **Quantitative Fit-Check**

A fit-check which uses instrumentation to detect leakage of a test agent into the respirator face piece.

REQUIREMENTS

- a) Engineering controls will be considered the primary means of controlling respiratory hazards. Respiratory protective equipment will only be used as a means of supplementing the protection provided by engineering controls or when engineering controls are:
 - i) not in existence or not obtainable
 - ii) not reasonable or practical due to frequency, duration or nature of the operation or procedure
 - iii) rendered ineffective due to a temporary breakdown
 - iv) ineffective to control in an emergency situation such as a spill
- b) The Occupational Hygienist will assess the need for the respiratory protective equipment and will select the appropriate type for the use situation. The selection criteria used will follow CSA Standard Z94.4-M1982.
- c) Only respirators accepted and approved by NIOSH or equivalent will be used.
- d) All respirator users will be fit-tested with the actual respiratory protective equipment that is intended for use. A qualitative fit-check will be the minimum fit-test required. For an IDLH atmosphere a quantitative fit-check must be used. Fit-checks must be repeated at least annually.
- e) Respirator users must be clean-shaven where the respirator face piece seals to the skin.
- f) The following persons must be trained to ensure the proper use of respirators:
 - i) The respirator user
 - ii) The supervisor of the respirator user
 - iii) The person issuing respirators
 - iv) The person performing fit-checks
 - v) The person maintaining and repairing respirators

The training must be repeated at least annually. The training program content will comply with CSA Standard Z94.4-M1982.

- g) All respirators shall be sanitized, inspected and maintained in accordance with CSA Standard Z94.4-M1982 after use on each shift, or more often as necessary, when issued exclusively for one worker, or after each use when used by more than one worker.
- h) All records of respirator fit-checks and training will be maintained by the Department of Occupational Health and Safety.
- l) Compressed breathing air and air compressors used for supplied-air respirators or self contained breathing apparatus shall comply with CSA Standard Z180.1-M85.
- j) All personnel required to use respirators are required to undergo an appropriate medical examination by a physician where there is doubt about the fitness or ability of the person to wear a respirator. The Occupational Hygienist will inform Staff/Faculty Health Services when there is a question of fitness. This examination will be equivalent to the baseline examination defined in CSA Standard Z94.4-M1982. The physician will inform the Occupational Hygienist whether or not a person has the fitness or ability to be assigned a task requiring the use of a respirator. Details of any medical examination will not be disclosed unless consent has been obtained from the person examined.