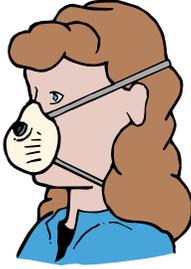


# Filtering Facepiece Use

Filtering Facepieces include paper dust mask filters and other negative pressure particulate respirators with filters that are an integral part of the facepiece. This also includes those with the entire facepiece composed of the filter medium.



## Particulate Respirators

- capture particles in the air, such as dusts, mists, and fumes
- do not protect against gases or vapors
- generally become more effective as particles accumulate on the filter and plug spaces between the fibers
- filters should be replaced when user finds it difficult to breath through them
- must be worn properly with both straps around the head

### The following conditions must exist in order for dust mask respirators to be used voluntarily:

- \* Exposure to airborne contaminants is below OSHA permissible exposure limits (PELs).
- \* Exposure is only to non-toxic nuisance materials (i.e. sawdust).
- \* There is **no** exposure to infectious disease agents (pathogenic *E. coli*, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*).
- \* The dust mask is not worn to reduce exposure to gases or vapors.

## Required Use

When your organization requires you to wear a filtering facepiece, OSHA requires:

1. Written Respiratory Protection Program that includes the following:
  - \* A qualified program administrator
  - \* Written procedures for use
  - \* Written procedures for cleaning, storage, and maintenance
  - \* Written training procedures
  - \* Written procedures for periodic program evaluation
2. Medical Evaluations
3. Respiratory Fit Tests Annually
4. Employee Training to include the following:
  - \* The hazards to which employees are exposed
  - \* Appropriate use of the equipment
  - \* Cleaning, storage and maintenance of the equipment

*See 29 CFR 1910.134*

## Voluntary Use

When your organization offers filtering facepieces for voluntary use only, OSHA says:

- \* Employers may provide respirators at the request of employees or permit employees to use their own respirators, if the employer determines that such respirator use will not in itself create a hazard.
- \* The employer shall provide the respirator users with the information contained in Appendix D of 1910.134
- \* The employer must establish and implement those elements of a written respiratory protection program necessary to ensure that any employee using a respirator voluntarily is medically able to use that respirator, and that the respirator is cleaned, stored, and maintained so that its use does not present a health hazard to the user.
- \* Employers are not required to include in a written respiratory protection program those employees whose only use of respirators involves the voluntary use of filtering facepieces (dust masks).

*See 29 CFR 1910.134(c)(2)(i-ii)*



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