



# UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

State University of New York

## UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY WRITTEN RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM

1. Written standard operating procedures have been developed by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety and are to be used in the selection, use, and maintenance of respiratory equipment at the University of Albany. These procedures may only be amended by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.
2. Employees will not be assigned to tasks requiring the use of respirators unless it has been determined **beforehand** that they are physically able to perform the work and wear a respirator. A physician or health care group **designated by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety** shall make this determination and shall include a health history via a questionnaire and a physical exam. Currently, Concentra Health Services is the designated health care group used by the University. The employee's medical status shall be reviewed periodically as determined by the examining physician. The process of medical clearance for respirator usage, fit testing, training and respirator issuance may take up to a month, so supervisors should plan accordingly.
3. Only National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) certified respirators will be used. The selection of the type of respirator the employee is given will be made only by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. This selection will be based on the hazards to which the employee may be exposed. Anytime a new job is started by an employee that requires the use of a respirator, the supervisor must check with the Environmental Health and Safety Office to ensure that their employees are wearing the correct respirator for the job. Respirators will only be issued from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety and must be requested **in advance** with a \*Protective Equipment Request Form.
4. All users of respirators will be instructed in respiratory protection and trained in the proper selection, use, limitations, and maintenance of a respirator. Instruction and training will include: rights and responsibilities; types of respirators and their operation; inspection, maintenance and cleaning of respirators; hands on orientation with the respirator; fitting instructions and practice including negative and positive fit check (user seal check) procedures; and respirator fit testing. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will provide instruction and training to supervisors and their employees.

5. Persons with facial hair, temple pieces on glasses or any other condition that prevents a good face seal will **only** be approved to wear a PAPR (Power Air Purifying Respirator) with either a hood or helmet that does not depend on a tight face seal for it to function properly.
6. To assure proper protection, the user will check the respirator face piece fit **every time** the respirator is put on. This will be accomplished by the user performing a positive and negative fit check (user seal check), if applicable to a particular respirator. Employees that have had a significant change in weight, facial structure etc. must contact the Environmental Health and Safety Office to be refitted.
7. Respirators will be assigned to individual employees for their exclusive use. Respirators will **not** be shared amongst employees.
8. Respirators will be regularly inspected before use and cleaned and dried by the individual after each day's use. Respirator wipes are available from the Environmental Health and Safety Office for the routine cleaning of an employee's respirator. These can be requested in advance through a \*Protective Equipment Request Form. All respirators will be sealed in a labeled protective container or bag to prevent contamination of the respirator. The respirators shall be stored clean and dry in a convenient and sanitary location.
9. Respirators shall be inspected routinely by the employees before and after usage. Worn or deteriorated parts shall be replaced as soon as detected by the employee. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will replace the parts or issue a new respirator if necessary. All filters/cartridges must be replaced whenever they are damaged, soiled, or causing noticeably increased breathing resistance (e.g. causing discomfort to the wearer). Before each use, the outside of the filter should be inspected. If the filter material is physically damaged or soiled, the filter should be changed (in the case of respirators with replaceable filters) or the respirator discarded (in the case of disposable respirators). Always follow the respirator filter manufacturer's service-time-limit recommendations. Respirators used for emergencies, such as self-contained breathing apparatus, or respirators stored for long periods of time, shall be inspected weekly and before each use.
10. Supervisors shall request surveillance of work area conditions and degree of employee exposure or stress, if a supervisor or an employee feels a respirator is required to perform a job safely from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.
11. Employees choosing to voluntarily wear dust/mist respirators (N95s) where the amount of hazardous substances the employee is expected to be exposed to does not exceed limits set by the OSHA standard (e.g. dust or dirt) must be given a copy of 1910.134 Appendix D. These employees do not fall under this written respiratory protection program. Only, the Environmental Health and Safety Office can make the determination that the dust/mist respirator (N95s) can be worn voluntarily.
12. The University's Respiratory Program will be evaluated regularly by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety to determine its effectiveness and may include inspections of respirators used and real time air sampling.

\* Protective Equipment Request Forms are available from the Environmental Health and Safety Office in Chemistry B73.

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