

What steps must be taken prior to attending Respirator Training and Fit testing

Respiratory Protection (a form of personal protective equipment - PPE) is always a last resort and should only be used when engineering, administrative and/or work practice controls cannot be put in place in the work environment. If it has been determined that these controls cannot be put in place and the respiratory hazard within the environment exceeds permissible exposure limits, PPE would at this point become necessary.

****Before respiratory protection training and fit testing begins the following steps
MUST be taken.****

Determination of hazard and concentration present (hazard assessment)

What respiratory hazards are you working with (identification of the respiratory hazard present)?

- Review the MSDS (if applicable) of the chemical or substance you are working with.
 - What does the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) say is required?
 - What type of respiratory protection is recommended on the MSDS, if any?
- What is the concentration of the hazard (how much of the hazard is present in the environment)?
 - What is the recommended, Threshold Limit Value (TLV) or Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) or Recommended Exposure Limit (REL).
 - Each of the above may be used to determine acceptable limits of exposure. (Commonly the lowest numbers indicated are used.)

If the type of hazard and concentration in the environment has not been identified, please contact EHS for assistance – 491-6745

Determination of the type of respirator needed

After determining that an appropriate engineering, administrative or work practice control cannot be put in place to mitigate the respiratory hazard present in the environment as well as determining that the concentration/amount of the hazard present in the work environment exceeds permissible and safe limits, the type of respirator required needs to be determined (N95, Dust mask, Air Purifying respirator (half face, full face or Powered Air Purifying) Airline respirator, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, etc).

If a ½ face or full face air purifying respirator has been deemed necessary, the type of filtering cartridge or canister must also be determined. Cartridges are only necessary for Air Purifying Respirators or Powered Air Purifying Respirators.

CSU Risk Assessment, OSHA Medical Evaluation Questionnaire

Once it has been determined that respiratory protection is necessary the employee must:

- Be risk assessed and enrolled into CSU's Occupational Health Program.
 - This may include a medical evaluation and pulmonary function test (spirometry test) be performed.
 - Prior to any respirator fit testing and training every employee who may be required to wear a respirator must be cleared by a qualified physician to do so.
 - To start the Occupational Health assessment, enrollment and medical clearance process follow the below steps:
 - Go to <http://www.ehs.colostate.edu/WOHSP/Home.aspx>
 - Under **Occupational Health Program** click "**Online Risk Assessment Form**"
 - Obtain a physicians evaluation report that the employee is "cleared to wear a respirator" or there are "no restrictions on respirator use"
 - Fill out [RF-16D Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire](#). The questionnaire is part of the overall document *RI-16 Respiratory Protection and Controls to Restrict Internal Exposure*.

*****You are not cleared to use a respirator until a qualified physician has cleared you to wear a respirator and you have no restrictions on respirator use and that documentation is on file at EHS. *****

Once an employee is given clearance to wear a respirator by a physician, the employee can then be trained and fit tested and enrolled into the respirator protection program.

- If the employee does not receive clearance from a physician and is **NOT** cleared to wear a respirator by an appropriate physician, they will NOT be allowed to wear a respirator nor be trained and fit tested as part of the CSU Respiratory Protection Program. Ultimately the physician makes this final determination and if an employee does not meet all of the physician's criteria, the physician will not qualify them to wear a respirator due to a determined health risk.

The appropriate model, size and type of respirator will be provided to the employee so that their specific department can order the respirator. (EHS does not provide respirators)

Loose Fitting Helmet/Hood Respirators

Fit Testing cannot be performed on a loose fitting hood/helmet PAPR. A respirator must be negative pressure during fit testing and a hood cannot be converted to a negative pressure.

- The employer shall ensure that an employee using a tight-fitting facepiece respirator is fit tested prior to initial use of the respirator, whenever a different respirator facepiece (size, style, model or make) is used, and at least annually thereafter. **OSHA 1910.134(f)(2)**

- Fit testing of tight-fitting atmosphere-supplying respirators and tight-fitting powered air-purifying respirators shall be accomplished by performing quantitative or qualitative fit testing in the negative pressure mode, regardless of the mode of operation (negative or positive pressure) that is used for respiratory protection. **OSHA 1910.134(f)(8)**

Any modifications to the respirator facepiece for fit testing shall be completely removed, and the facepiece restored to NIOSH-approved configuration, before that facepiece can be used in the workplace.