

## Respiratory Protection

It is the intent of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to provide its employees with a safe and healthful working environment. This is accomplished as much as possible with the use of accepted engineering and administrative controls. When these methods are not feasible or are inadequate, respiratory protection is provided to reduce employee exposure to concentrations of the contaminant that will be non-injurious to most individuals. These concentrations were established as standards by regulatory and/or professional organizations.

All units whose employees and students are required to wear respiratory protection must implement the university's Employee Respiratory Protection Program. This requirement is based on the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29(CFR)1910.134, Respiratory Protection Standard, which is enforced on this campus by the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL).

Before any campus unit may require an employee or student to wear a respirator the following items must be completed:

- Contact Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) department of Safety & Compliance to conduct a hazard evaluation of the work area or job to determine the appropriate respirator for the job.
- Develop a written program. A sample employee program is contained in the university's Employee Respiratory Protection Program. (Voluntary usage of a filter face respirator (i.e., paper mask) does not require a written respirator program).
- Contact OSH to schedule a medical evaluation of each employee or student expected to wear a respirator. It is important to note that some individuals cannot and should not wear a respirator. Also, for some employees, medical evaluations must be repeated on a regular basis, such as the annual requirement for asbestos workers.
- Contact OSH to schedule employee training. Each employee required to wear a respirator needs to understand how to: properly wear, clean, inspect and store their respirator.
- Contact OSH to schedule a fit test to ensure a proper fit for every employee or student required to wear a negative and/or positive pressure respirator. Beards and other facial hair interfere with the proper fit of all negative pressure and most positive pressure respirators. Therefore, employees with facial hair shall not be fitted with any respirator that requires that a fit test be conducted.

For additional information, employee training, fit testing or assistance with hazard evaluations call OSH (217) 244-0415 or e-mail to [m-banks@uiuc.edu](mailto:m-banks@uiuc.edu).

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