



BRIEFING

RESPIRATOR PROTECTION

Respirator must be available to each employee when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of such employee. Refer to OSHA Standards 29 CFR 1910.134.

TYPES OF RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

- Atmosphere-supplying
 - Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
 - Airline respirators
- Air-purifying
 - Gas and vapor
 - Particulate
 - Combination

Know all the available types of respirators for this facility.

The most common type of respirator in use today is the air-purifying variety. It is important to remember that these respirators do not supply oxygen; they simply filter the air that we breathe. Another type of respirator is an atmosphere-supplying respirator commonly used by emergency responders and spill cleanup personnel.

EFFECTIVE USE OF RESPIRATORS

- During installation of engineering controls
- During maintenance operations
- During process turnarounds
- For non-routine tasks
- For emergency response
- At hazardous waste site operations
- When other controls are inadequate
- When other controls are not feasible

Respirators should never be the first line of defense because they can be difficult to use. However, this list of situations provides a foundation for the effective use of respiratory protection. Keep in mind that non-routine tasks are those typically performed by the maintenance or other service organization. Each non-routine task will vary, and it is difficult to implement engineering controls. For that reason, maintenance operations use respirators extensively.

EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS

The use of respiratory protection may limit the effectiveness of the employee. For that reason, some employees do not like to wear a respirator. It is important to be comfortable with the respirator. If not, notify supervisor. A better fit is likely available. Employees have a right and responsibility for a safe workplace.

Respirators must not impair the ability to see, hear, communicate, and move as necessary to perform the job safely. Comprehensive training is essential for correct, proper, and safe use of respirators.

